PLAINCLOTHES AND OFF-DUTY OFFICER SURVIVAL

A Guide to Survival for Plainclothes Officers, Undercover Officers, and Off-Duty Police Officers

By

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TONY LESCE

This amply illustrated text first takes a close look at the situations that plainclothes, undercover, and off-duty officers face; and then it discusses the tactics and equipment necessary to help these officers survive a deadly encounter. Numerous examples of encounters with suspects that turned deadly are included. The authors also address liability issues, policies to promote officer safety and reduce individual/departmental liability, carelessness, tactics, close combat, moonlighting, equipment, and training methods. A firearms training and qualification course rounds out this integral work.

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PREFACE

This book deals with plainclothes survival for officers in both large and small departments. We'll cover topics pertaining to detectives, off-duty officers, firearms trainers, and police administrators.

It's not just applying ordinary "survival training," because the situations plainclothes officers face aren't the same as those the patrol division encounters. Detectives don't make traffic stops, and don't get called to family fights. Instead, plainclothes officers interview witnesses, suspects, and sometimes serve civil papers and make arrests in circumstances different from those faced by patrol officers. Also, detectives don't have the same equipment as do uniformed officers.

To understand plainclothes training and equipment needs, we must first understand the demands plainclothes officers must meet. We'll take a close look at the situations plainclothes and off-duty officers face. We'll examine other situations that arise when officers remove their uniforms. We'll look at officers who "moonlight" as security guards, or who work as store detectives watching for shoplifters, and who sometimes encounter violence. We'll also consider the problems faced by a police officer who works off-duty as a bodyguard, and who has to be prepared for threats to his client. We'll study the dangers encountered, and the reasons why plainclothes and off-duty police officers take needless risks in certain cases. Analyzing why events happen provides understanding, and we can explore ways to correct the problems. We can then lay out the training methods and equipment needed, based on the lessons learned from the real-life examples. Training consists of both classroom sessions and field work. Teaching theory provides a basic framework to use for the various concepts we will present here, but effective training can't stop at the classroom door. There are both practical and legal reasons why there must be a strong emphasis on hands-on work. Many of the survival skills are psychomotor skills, and only practical application will build proficiency.

Because most of the threats faced by police officers are at very close

range, hand-to-hand combat skill is critically important. You will find material on this topic within these pages.

You will be able to take some of the lessons directly from this book. In it, you will find suggestions for discussions, practical exercises, and lesson plans adaptable to both classroom and firing range. You will find ways to adapt your existing training techniques to provide the skills needed for plainclothes survival. You will find discussions of techniques and tactics useful in a variety of situations you may encounter when not in uniform. You will also find practical exercises to promote tactical skills in training. This is a work-book as well as a text.

Study the examples and lessons carefully. The information in these pages can save lives.

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PLAINCLOTHES AND OFF-DUTY OFFICER SURVIVAL

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

A plainclothes officer serving a civil paper encounters a subject who becomes assaultive. An off-duty patrolman and his family come face to face with a violent felon who had sworn to harm him and his family upon release from prison.

The doctrine of "officer survival" is well established for patrol officers, who benefit from various training materials and seminars. Almost every police agency has some sort of officer survival program. In the larger departments, this is part of the academy training. Other agencies use outside consultants to provide survival training for their officers. There are books and videotapes, and some consultants travel around the country providing seminars on officer survival for the uniformed officer.

At the same time, the needs of plainclothes and off-duty officers receive much less attention. These, as well as patrol officers, experience close encounters of the worst kind, but are often unprepared to meet them.

The "moonlighting" officer also encounters violent crime. Officer Mike Burg points this out very well in his article, "You're a Cop, Do Something!" in the March/April 1988 issue of **Police Marksman.** Off-duty officers have walked into holdups in progress, or have been in stores when armed robbers entered. Some officers "moonlight" as store security guards, keeping watch for shoplifters. If they're working such a job when a stickup occurs, they may feel pressured to intervene. Worse, as Burg points out, someone who knows them may say, "You're a cop, do something!"

All uniformed officers become "plainclothes" officers after the end of shift, when they tend to relax. Duty, however, does not end with the shift. In many jurisdictions police officers are considered on duty 24 hours a day, and authorized to carry concealed weapons. It's important for the police officer, uniformed or not, on duty or not, to be ready to meet unexpected threats. Many, however, relax too much once out of uniform.

There are several reasons for this. One is that the risks are greatest among patrol officers. FBI "Officers Killed" figures show that uniformed

patrol officers take most of the casualties. This is because they're the largest group and usually the first to respond to dangerous situations.

The nature of investigative work is another reason. Most of it is after-the-fact. By the time the investigator arrives at the scene, the suspect is either under arrest or has escaped, and the detective's tasks usually involve only routine investigative work. He inspects the crime scene, takes statements from witnesses, and arranges for specialized examinations. In many instances, the crimes are nonviolent. The net result is that the criminal investigator is rarely involved in shoot-outs. His task is intellectually challenging, but not ordinarily dangerous.

Some plainclothes officers have assignments that seem very safe, such as serving civil warrants. This type of assignment often goes to older officers close to retirement, to let them serve out their last years peacefully. Yet, even this can bring unpleasant and dangerous surprises. Two plainclothes officers serving a civil repossession order at a mobile home in Phoenix, Arizona found themselves in a shoot-out with the resident. None of the three survived the encounter.

When situations turn violent, there are several immediate repercussions, such as injuries, deaths, and additional charges. Among them is the prospect of liability, even if the combatants survive the encounter. Several recent court decisions affect the picture, and we'll discuss how liability plays a part in decisions regarding tactics, training, and equipment.

Many plainclothes officers who are killed or injured fall victims because of their attitudes, preparation, equipment, or training. The purpose of this book is to help you, the plainclothes officer, to prepare for and to survive a deadly encounter if ever one comes your way.

In large agencies, a standard response to the problem of a high-risk arrest is "call for S.W.A.T." It helps to have heavily armed and armored officers confront a fugitive, but this doesn't help the small agency investigator who doesn't have the option of sending for S.W.A.T. Having a S.W.A.T. Team on call doesn't help when the officer faces a totally unexpected crisis. This book will cover what the plainclothes officer needs to know when he doesn't have a heavily armed response team to support him.

In certain instances, we've blurred the locations, dates, and identities involved. This is to save from embarrassment the people who cooperated with us in this project. They were very candid in admitting their errors and shortcomings, and we feel obliged to repay the courtesy.

Figure 1. When an officer becomes a casualty, his attitudes, preparation, equipment, and training have often played a big a part as the person who pulled the trigger.

Chapter Two

IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU!

Maybe you're lucky. Maybe you work for a small police department that has had few, if any, casualties. Maybe you have an assignment that you consider pretty safe, because nobody's ever gotten killed doing it. Possibly nobody's ever even been assaulted doing this job. Still, there's always a first time.

There are statistics to prove that plainclothes assignments are safer than patrol duties. These help measure the risks of assault or death as they relate to a large number of people. However, if you're the unlucky one, the risk is 100 percent!

It can happen to you. Some suspects won't give in easily. Some would rather take your life than surrender their freedom. In other cases, what starts out as a simple and nonviolent "job" turns ugly. In later chapters, we'll examine some case histories as we seek to learn lessons from them.

Chapter Three

WHAT CAN GO WRONG

There have been several notable incidents of plainclothes assignments turning deadly very quickly. As we explore the topic in the following chapters, we'll see that there are several contributing causes to the problem, and that some threads run through all incidents.

Serving A Civil Paper

In 1971, Rex Stone and Warren LaRue were sheriff's deputies working out their last months before retirement on a relatively "safe" assignment, warrant service for the civil division. One day, around 11:00 A.M., they went to a mobile home park to serve a repossession order on a man named Hector Garcia. He owed a local bank $833 on his trailer home, which the deputies planned to tow away. When they arrived, Garcia asked them for a little time, so that he might remove his possessions from the mobile home. Stone and LaRue agreed, and went off to take lunch after padlocking his trailer hitch.

They returned in about an hour, accompanied by a tow truck and driver. LaRue went to the trunk of their car, and Garcia walked up behind him and shot him four times with a .32 auto pistol. After LaRue went down, Garcia walked around to the side of the car and fired at Stone, shooting him once in the chest. This was a lethal shot, but Stone was a big man, and he absorbed the hit, drew his "snubby" .38 Special revolver, and before falling returned fire. He hit Garcia with all five shots, killing him. Powder marks on the clothing of both men showed that they were very close while exchanging shots.

Having survived many years of quelling bar fights and arresting armed and dangerous felons can lead to a feeling of self-confidence. It can also lead to overconfidence. A civil service, by contrast, seems like a "pussycat" assignment. The unpredictability of the human personality can bring on a dangerous situation.

What other conclusions can we draw from this incident?

Is there any reason for complacency because a suspect is "outgunned" by officers carrying larger-caliber weapons?

Despite all the rhetoric on the alleged "stopping power" of the larger calibers, does anything in this incident show that the smaller handgun was inadequate?

What inferences can we draw from this account on the value of the one-hand grip versus the various types of two-handed stances?

Coming To The Scene Unarmed

Oversights don't always end in a fatality. A detective investigating a homicide scene had left his sidearm behind. The wife, murdered by the husband, lay dead on the floor. The husband returned to the scene of the crime unseen by officers outside the house, and entered the house unnoticed by the detective. The investigator heard a shot elsewhere in the house, and realizing that he was unarmed, immediately went outside to borrow a gun from a uniformed officer. He went back in, and found that the husband had shot himself to death. This isn't unique. Let's look at another incident:

Members of a narcotics task force planned a raid on a marijuana "garden." One investigator, who was also overage and badly out of shape, realized during the ride to the site that he had left his sidearm in the office. He borrowed a revolver from another person in the vehicle. Arriving at the site, the officers found the suspect not home, and they arrested him without incident when he came on the scene a couple of hours later.

These incidents show different degrees of unpreparedness. In the first case, the detective expected only a dead body and a routine investigation. Although he still shouldn't have been unarmed, the reason for his complacency is understandable. The second officer described had no excuse. He knew that he was going on the raid for at least two hours before setting out, giving him ample time to prepare. This officer, used to sitting at a desk for years, was also physically so frail that he might not have been able to defend himself in a punch-out. Unarmed, he would have had to rely on other officers to defend him. Had events turned out differently, he might have been injured or killed.

Child Support Warrant

Two District Attorney's Investigators in Sacramento, California, had a bench warrant for the arrest of a man in a child support case. This was a

minor matter, and they did not expect violence. At the subject's residence, they greeted the landlady who answered the door. She went back to tell the subject that he had visitors while the officers waited in a vestibule. The officers then went back to the subject's room and started to go in the door. The subject, from the corner opposite the door, opened fire while the officers were clustered in the doorway. He wounded one officer with his 9mm auto pistol. Both officers retreated, the wounded one going into the next room, where the shooter pursued him and finished him off. The subject then followed the other officer outside, where they exchanged shots, leaving the officer wounded and the subject dead.

Instead of presenting conclusions, let's try some questions:

Is there any guarantee that a small offense, such as a failure to pay child support, won't involve someone with a tendency towards violence?

Would it be a good move to look over the case file for a history of violence before going out to arrest this person? If not, how about a quick phone call to the person handling the case, such as a social worker?

Would you allow a subject, still out of sight in another room, time to prepare before you confronted him?

In this regard, was it a good move to allow the landlady to go back to announce the arrival of the officers?

If there were no other choice, would you consider having the suspect come out to the vestibule, instead of walking back into his territory?

If you had to go back to the suspect's bedroom, would you have done it exactly the way these officers did? If not, what would you have changed?

The Deadly Bar Check

In Phoenix, Arizona, on July 1, 1982, two detectives checked out a bar near a bank that had just been robbed. At the time, it was standard practice for available officers to check bars near the scene of a bank robbery on the theory that a robber might go in for cover, as well as for a drink to calm his nerves. When detectives entered this bar, they walked in together and immediately went up to the bartender instead of first cautiously scanning the interior. When they asked the bartender if any suspicious person had come in recently, the bartender pointed to a corner booth about 25 feet from where they stood and said "there."

The suspect reacted first, opening fire with a .32 auto pistol. He immediately scored hits, as the two detectives were clustered at one end of the bar. He hit one officer in the side with his first shot, putting him down before he could draw his sidearm. This officer died on the spot.

Now shooting at the second officer, the suspect wounded him as the detective drew and fired back with his .38 Special revolver. One of the officer's bullets hit the suspect in the thigh after bouncing off the table pedestal, but the other four missed entirely. The suspect apparently had had to clear a jam while exchanging shots with the officers, as a live .32ACP round turned up on the floor near his table after the shooting. He nevertheless scored a disabling hit with one .32 bullet, putting the officer down. The suspect left the scene after firing a total of seven shots, but was arrested later. The officer later died of his wound in the hospital.

Let's ask some questions about this tragedy:

Would you want to wear body armor during such an assignment?

Would you walk into a dark bar, seeking an armed robbery suspect, without scouting the premises first?

Would you and your partner both go in the same way if the bar had two entrances?

How many people does it take to ask the bartender a question?

What could your partner be doing while you were questioning the bartender?

Do you feel that a suspect armed with only a .32 is out-gunned?

Have you and your partner had much practice in low-light shooting?

The Miami Gunfight

On April 11, 1986, FBI agents were conducting a surveillance in Miami. They were trying to find two bank robbery suspects who had conducted a string of robberies during the previous few months. At about 9:30 A.M., two agents noticed a black Chevrolet Monte Carlo which they knew the suspects had used. They called for backup, and followed the Monte Carlo. Several blocks later, after being joined by at least three other FBI cars containing six agents, the agents forced the Monte Carlo to pull over. The suspects came out shooting, and a gunfight erupted. Eyewitness accounts of the shoot-out differ, but the result was that about three and a half minutes later, about 140 shots had been fired. The two suspects, both army veterans, and two FBI agents lay dead. Five more FBI agents were wounded.

It's impossible to reconstruct a detailed account without risking accuracy. The Miami police report differs from the newspaper account in the number of cars involved, for example. Both differ from the FBI version. What is clear is the casualty count. Also clear is the inference that the suspects did not meekly surrender when confronted by superior force.

but fought with great ferocity, not to be taken alive. Both suspects continued to fight after being hit, and one of them, Platt, took 12 gunshot wounds before going down. Meanwhile, he delivered devastating fire with his Mini-14. Only two of the FBI Agents were wearing body armor, although others carried it in their cars.

This incident was one of the highlights of a wound ballistics symposium the FBI held last year. The focus was on the suspect, Platt, and the Winchester Silvertip cartridges fired at him by the FBI Agents. There are broader issues, though. Let's ask some hard questions about the implications of this incident:

Does your agency have a doctrine regarding felony stops?

Can you explain the advantages of delaying a felony stop to secure a tactical superiority?

Do you or any of your fellow officers believe that any handgun or caliber can unfailingly put down an adversary?

Do you or any of your fellow officers believe that gaining numerical superiority over the suspects is enough?

When expecting to confront armed and dangerous felons, do you make sure you wear whatever body armor is available, or do you tend to leave it on the back seat of your car until you feel sure you'll need it?

Do you understand that an army veteran with combat skills may be able to put up effective resistance? Can you accept that he may be able to out-fight you?

With an encounter resulting in about 140 shots fired, how would you assess the danger to bystanders?

Is liability an important factor in these circumstances?

The Stake-Out

Sometimes becoming too excited in the heat of the chase can lead to a judgment error:

A team of officers was staking out a shopping plaza which had experienced a rash of "front breaks," thieves breaking store windows and grabbing what they could before the police arrived. One officer observed a suspicious vehicle cruising the area during the pre-dawn hours. The vehicle had two men inside, one of whom got out and threw a heavy object through a store window. One officer had gotten out of his vehicle and was stalking the suspects on foot. He challenged the suspect, who jumped back into the car, which took off. The officer started firing at the

moving vehicle, but missed, but his stray shots broke two plate glass windows. The only casualties in this incident were the windows.

Does your departmental policy allow firing at moving vehicles?

Discuss the pros and cons of shooting at moving vehicles.

Would you handle this sort of stake-out differently?

Discuss how and why.

How would time of day affect your plans?

Mistaken Identity

It's bad enough when a police officer is injured or killed by a suspect. An officer who mistakenly shoots another compounds the tragedy. We're going to take a look at one almost-shooting and two instances in which an officer mistakenly fired at another. One resulted in an injury, and the other resulted in death.

This happened several years ago in Douglas, Arizona, where one of the authors (JC) was a patrol officer:

"I responded to a 'shots fired' call and came upon what I later found to be a police shooting in progress. I took cover behind my patrol vehicle and identified myself as a police officer to the suspect nearest me, directing him to 'FREEZE.' He turned towards me with a .380 pistol in his hand and had brought the weapon into line before he said, 'I'm a cop.' I came within half a trigger pull of killing an undercover agent brought in from out-of-town to do a major drug buy."

What can we learn from this almost-tragic incident?

Is it wise to use an undercover agent totally unknown to local officers with whom he may come into contact?

Can you think of a simple recognition signal that undercover officers might use to prevent mistaken identifications?

What does this incident tell you about interagency cooperation?

Officer Down

An off-duty officer dressed in an old jacket and hat drove into a shopping center parking lot and saw a robbery in progress at a liquor store. As he got out of his car, he drew his weapon and shouted at the fleeing robbers to stop. When they ignored him and ran in several directions, he pursued one on foot, weapon in hand. Meanwhile, patrol officers responding to the "silent alarm" saw him running and ordered him to stop. He started to turn towards the officers, gun in hand, and to

yell, "I'm on the job," but the officers thought he was one of the suspects and opened fire, hitting him in the leg.

Points to discuss:

"I'm on the job" is an expression used by New York City officers as a recognition signal. Is there an equivalent expression in your area or agency?

What would you do if you came upon a robbery in progress while off-duty?

If you decided to pursue, how would you go about it?

The Drug Raid

The state police's narcotics bureau had planned a raid in a suburban town adjoining the state capital. Following common courtesy, they notified the town's police department and requested the presence of one of their officers. The department assigned a plainclothes officer to accompany the "narks," and a marked car for standby and traffic control.

The site of the raid was a one-story house with a front yard and back garden. The local plainclothes officer went in the front door with the raiding party while state officers guarded the back yard to prevent escape. The plainclothes officer went through the house and out the kitchen door into the back yard. It was at this point that he came face to face with a state officer, who reacted to his surprise at seeing an armed man running towards him by shooting him. The officer survived the shooting.

What can we learn from this incident?

Could this have happened in your jurisdiction?

What does this incident suggest about tactics?

Do you feel the central problem was recognition, or taking an exposed position which made it urgent to shoot?

Could the shooting have been avoided if the local officer had shouted to the officers in the yard before running out?

What does this incident suggest regarding the use of "Raid Jackets?"

The FBI Raid

On October 4, 1985, eleven agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation went to an apartment complex in Phoenix, Arizona, late one night to arrest an armed robber, Barrett. Among them was a new female agent, Robin Ahrens. The agents had planned to arrest Barrett in an open area, but this plan quickly fell apart. For unknown reasons, one agent unex-

pectedly confronted Barrett in a walkway in the complex. Barrett did not submit, and struggled with the agent over his gun. During the skirmish, the gun went off, the bullet narrowly missing the agent. Other agents, hearing the shot, came running from several directions. Two FBI agents, seeing Robin Ahrens running towards the scene, opened fire because they thought she was Barrett's female friend. Despite the poor light, too dim for positive identification, their bullets hit Ahrens in the hand, arm, and eye, the last being fatal.

Months later, Director William Webster of the FBI announced that one agent was fired, one resigned, and three suffered disciplinary action as a result. In his announcement, he acknowledged that "certain procedures" were not followed, without specifying exactly which procedures he meant.

Let's ask some questions that relate to how you would have handled such an incident:

How carefully do you plan a raid?

Do you make sure that everyone knows everybody else?

Is there an extra hazard in night raids, in your opinion?

Would there have been anything to gain by timing the raid for the next morning?

Do you issue raid jackets to everyone involved in a raid? How visible are these in low light?

Do you make sure that everyone working the perimeter understands that he's to stay put?

Are your people thoroughly indoctrinated in taking and using cover to gain time to ID the target?

The Accidental Discharge

Incidents don't always have to be fatal for us to learn from them. Police in Tampa, Florida, were conducting an undercover drug buy during the early afternoon of April 13, 1987. A suspect ran out of the house involved and locked himself in a car. Sergeant Jake Slater, after failing to get the car door open, broke a side window with his .38 Special revolver. During the effort, Sergeant Slater's weapon discharged inadvertently, but the bullet did not find a human target. The suspect suffered face cuts and a glass fragment entered his eye.

What conclusions can we draw from this incident regarding the relative safety of revolvers versus auto pistols?

With the suspect locked in a car, but not attempting to drive it away, is it wise to force an entry with a handgun?

Would it have been wiser to wait and procure a hammer or axe?

If the suspect had been shot accidentally, would this have increased the chances of a jury's finding the officer civilly liable?

Different Places, Different Times

These incidents, although related by their involving plainclothes officers, happened in different parts of the country to members of different agencies, and at different times. This shows that the problem is not limited to one department or to one especially violent sector of the nation. It's all over and affects many police agencies.

Chapter Four

LIABILITY

"Liability" has become the big buzz-word in police work during the 1980s. There are so many laws, rules, and court decisions, that you may feel that you're sitting on a time bomb every time you work a case. Liability cuts several ways.

Individual Liability.

A police officer can be individually liable. If he's not following official policy, he's on his own. This isn't very surprising, as even "common sense" shows that if an officer fires his weapon into the air at a party and injures someone by this action, he's both civilly and criminally liable.

Paul Weston, formerly of the New York City Police Department, mentioned a case in his **Combat Shooting For Police**, First Edition. A police officer firing at an armed robber instead hit the victim. This brings the prospect of individual and agency liability. The incident happened to a patrol officer, but a similar situation can face a plainclothes or off-duty officer who happens to be there when a robbery "comes down."

What of the officer who does his best to follow both the laws and his agency's policies? If he follows "good faith," showing that he believed that his actions were lawful and in accord with official policy, he's got a fighting chance of getting off the hook. This doesn't necessarily hold for his employer, however. A police administrator may feel that his department can also use the "good faith" defense, but the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the 1980 case of Owen vs. City of Independence has cast a doubt on this.

Departmental Liability

The "Margate" Decision (Peplow vs. Margate, NJ, 1975) and others have made it clear that a police department and the higher government agency, such as a city or county, are responsible for an officer's training and on-the-job performance. This body of doctrine has become what we call today "vicarious liability." In laymen's terms, this means that a

government agency or other employer is legally responsible for the employee's actions. Liability can come about through failure to adequately equip, train, or adequately supervise an officer to ensure that he follows agency policies.

A case that went before the U. S. Supreme Court, Oklahoma City Vs. Tuttle (53 U.S.L.W. 4639 [U.S. 6-5-85]) established that a single instance of "deliberate indifference" or "gross negligence" was enough to show that the agency was responsible for a wrongful fatal shooting. In this case, a rookie officer shot an unarmed robber in the back.

Vicarious Liability

Vicarious liability is far-reaching today. The case of Sager vs. City of Woodland Park, Colorado (543 Federal Supplement 282, 1982) showed that an agency is even responsible for training materials originating outside the department. In this case, the agency was liable because a training officer failed to point out to trainees that an act depicted in a training film conflicted with the law or departmental policy.

In another case, in which a suspect escaped from custody in a court house, if the suspect had picked up a weapon left in a desk drawer by a detective, any innocent parties shot with that weapon would have had a case against the police agency because of the officer's negligence in leaving a weapon where a suspect could have access to it.

Training isn't the complete answer to avoiding vicarious liability. While a police agency must provide adequate training, this doesn't let the police administrator off the hook. It does reduce personal liability if the superior officer can show that he carried out his responsibilities. The burden then shifts to the individual officer who did not do his job properly. Police officers, however, are rarely affluent enough to make good targets for litigation, although some of them carry liability insurance.

The "Deep Pockets" Doctrine

This brings up the "deep pockets" doctrine. What it means is that the party with the ability to pay is often stuck for the tab despite having played a small role in the actual incident. When we consider that a person wrongfully shot can sustain crippling wounds, the award can be very large. Although the settlement for "pain and suffering" varies with the jurisdiction, if the plaintiff can show a projected loss of income or continuing cost of medical care because of the injury, the amount can easily equal a lifetime's earnings. Including lost income, medical expenses,

and an award for pain and suffering, the judgment can total several million dollars. Individual officers don't have that much money. Only a government can pay this, and usually the city or county government has to assume the bulk of the judgment.

There's a growing rebellion against the deep pockets doctrine. Arizona recently passed a law limiting payments to the percentage of liability determined by the court. This avoids assessing the most affluent defendant with the bill regardless of the relative negligence involved.

It would be nice to end this chapter in an upbeat manner, but the "real world" picture is too discouraging for that. If you take a long and objective look at liability, you'll see that, even though you carefully study the laws, regulations, and court decisions, you can still get caught short because they change every day. A court decision five states away can affect how you do your job. Trying to keep up with the liability picture is like walking on quick-sand.

The only realistic way to handle the problem is to keep up on developments, document your good faith as well as possible, and trust to luck. In the real world, luck is important. The odds are in your favor that you will not be the one at the center of a huge lawsuit. Most of the time, it happens to "the other guy." Keeping up-to-date on the legal picture can help your luck. Allowing yourself to become complacent and adopting an attitude of "If it happens, it happens" is pushing your luck. As we saw in an earlier chapter, if it happens to you the risk is 100 percent!

Chapter Five

OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

Let's look at the factors that contribute to a plainclothes or off-duty officer's having a poor chance of surviving a deadly threat:

Attitude

The basic problem is that of attitude. From this all other problems grow. Attitude develops with an officer's experience on the job. Recruits usually start their careers in patrol, and don't attain plainclothes status until they've had some experience and "seasoning" in the field. During this initial period, they encounter a variety of dangerous situations, and most of them survive to work another day. The experience of having coped with many dangerous suspects gives police officers a feeling of confidence which gradually replaces the apprehension affecting newcomers to any job. A problem arises if officers become over-confident, and start taking themselves and their environment for granted. Sometimes the assignment fosters a feeling of inflated confidence.

Detectives tend to see themselves as an elite force within the agency. In some police departments, a detective assignment is actually a promotion in grade, bringing more pay and perquisites. If the officer allows himself to become arrogant and complacent because of this, he'll be less aware of his vulnerability. Another facet is the way officers think of their suspects.

Underestimating Suspects. Police officers often adopt an attitude of contempt towards suspects. They refer to them as "scrotes", "scumbags", and other uncomplimentary names, but when they start under-estimating their suspects they fall into a pattern of self-delusion. Some patrol officers have found out that certain suspects can be very ferocious and dangerous, and can even out-fight them.

Patrol officers encountering such dangerous suspects call for backup when time allows. If they don't, they're being foolish. Pierce Brooks, in his **Officer Down, Code Three,** warns against what he calls "tombstone courage." Plainclothes officers can make the same mistake, but are even more complacent because they rarely encounter violence directed at

Figure 2. Do you think that every subject will only reach for his wallet when you flash your badge? Some are not cooperative, and you can get hurt if you think they are.

themselves. This is why many plainclothes officers adopt a "can't happen to me" outlook, which poisons their preparedness. One consequence is that some of them become complacent to the point of negligence. The results can be embarrassing, and even dangerous.

Do you fall into this pattern? Do you think that all suspects are going to stop when you yell "STOP," or "FREEZE?" Do you really believe that none will ever turn and fight you?

Can you bring yourself to believe that you might encounter suspects who can out-fight you and out-shoot you? Some suspects might, especially if they're military veterans and have had substantial combat and weapons training.

Remember the FBI shoot-out in Miami, where the two suspects gave as good as they got. Although they were killed in the end, they killed two FBI agents and wounded five others in the affray. Remember that they were outnumbered eight to two. Also remember that they were U. S. Army Veterans and former paratroopers. When challenged, they fought with everything they had instead of giving up, and finally died of wounds sustained in the gunfight. They had both the will and the skill to fight ferociously. It was "Newhall" all over again, but this time the FBI, and not the California Highway Patrol, took the casualties.

Another lesson to learn from the Miami shoot-out is that the military have a different doctrine regarding gunfire than do the police. The police doctrine is one of minimal force, but the military favor using overwhelming firepower until the target is "neutralized." If you encounter skilled veterans, as the FBI Agents did, don't be surprised if they use a lot of firepower.

Remember the child support case. The suspect was armed with a 9mm auto, and wounded one officer and killed another before being killed himself.

If outnumbered suspects can fight effectively, what about those who are also out-gunned? Hector Garcia, in his mobile home, had only one .32 ACP auto pistol against the sheriff's deputies' two caliber .38 Special revolvers. He killed them both, although one of his victims lived long enough to return fire and kill Garcia on the spot.

The two detectives who entered the bar in Phoenix looking for a bank robbery suspect were armed with .38 Special revolvers, and the suspect had "only" a .32 auto. Even with five-shot revolvers, they had a total of ten rounds without reloading to the suspect's eight. Five of those .38s never went off, because the suspect put the first officer down before he could even draw his weapon. The other officer missed with all rounds, and only a lucky ricochet off the table pedestal inflicted a thigh wound on the suspect. The suspect missed with all but two shots, but both shots were fatal.

The danger from the suspects is bad enough, but what about your fellow officers? Do you think it's impossible to be shot by one of your buddies? Think again. You might know each other by sight, and have planned a raid carefully, but in the confusion you can still catch it. We'll describe how it happened more than once.

Carelessness. Criminal investigators, as sworn police officers, are entitled, and in some cases, required to be armed. However, some leave their weapons at home, in the office, or locked in their cars. They feel that they'll never have to use a weapon, and if they do, there will be ample time to get it. Being unarmed can be embarrassing at times, and in some cases it brings the potential for disaster. Consider the following case, which we mentioned briefly earlier:

A defendant in a felony trial snatched his guard's sidearm in a court house elevator. He managed to escape unseen from the building before police and security officers sealed the exits. Because authorities thought he might still be in the building, they decided to search it floor by floor and room by room. This process of "clearing" the building took many hours because it was necessary to examine every crawl-space and every duct large enough to hold a man. In one of the building's offices, detectives were asked to join in the search and carry out a preliminary examination of their floor. Several were unarmed, having left their pistols in their cars.

One detective, also confined to the building, managed to round up several weapons that other officers had left behind when they'd gone out on assignments prior to the escape. One plainclothes investigator had left his revolver in an unlocked desk drawer in an unlocked office. Another kept his in a valise on top of a bookcase in his unlocked office. Yet another carried his sidearm in a locked briefcase, but had left this in an unlocked office. These careless practices could easily have resulted in a suspect's acquiring a weapon without even having to force a locked door.

Many plainclothes investigators become lax. Undercover officers, by contrast, rarely take a complacent attitude. Because they're constantly living "on the edge," their state of mind is more like paranoia than complacency.

Preparation

The effects of complacency show up most in lack of preparation. Many plainclothes officers give little thought to what they will do if a situation turns ugly. In some cases this is understandable. Officers seeking to serve civil papers don't anticipate violent resistance, and if they're unfortunate enough to run across the rare individual who panics and decides to resist, their unpreparedness is at least understandable. A suspect wanted on a "heavy" charge, on the other hand, calls for caution. Any officer not prepared for a violent response is negligent, and this is what can get him killed.

An advantage of "working partners" is that the members of the team become well-acquainted as they continue to work together, and the many hours spent on assignments provide opportunities to exchange ideas and plans for handling various situations. Many partners allow complacency to overcome their sense of caution, and pass up the opportunity to plan the approach when going out on assignment. Because they've handled many such cases before, they forget that each case is unique, and brings with it a new opportunity for mishap. This affects preparation.

One example of what can happen when officers neglect prudent security measures is the "Riverside" incident:

Two plainclothes officers in Riverside, California, assigned to warrant service, went to arrest Jackson Daniels, a convicted felon. Daniels had been shot by police officers interrupting a bank robbery in January, 1980. The bullet, striking his spine, had paralyzed him from the waist down. Daniels had been convicted of the crime, sentenced to a 13-year term in prison, and was out on bail until he was to begin serving his time. He didn't appear at the appointed time, and the judge issued a bench warrant for him.

At Daniels' home, the plainclothesmen followed the housekeeper to Daniels' bedroom. Daniels, wearing a shirt but no pants or shorts, was sitting on the bed. Because they didn't know him by sight, they asked the person they saw to confirm that he was Jackson Daniels. He did, and offered no resistance at the moment.

Daniels asked the housekeeper to get his clothing for him, and the officers, perhaps from a feeling of modesty, failed either to handcuff or search him. They missed the .38 revolver which Daniels held between his thighs.

When the housekeeper went into the closet to get his clothes, Daniels

drew his weapon and shot one officer in the head, causing him to go down immediately. He turned his weapon on the second officer, who was standing in the doorway. There was an exchange of shots. One of Daniels' shots hit the detective in his gun hand, and a police bullet injured Daniels' gun arm.

The officer retreated from the doorway into the hall, carrying his revolver with him. Daniels left his bed and removed the downed officer's revolver from his belt, as this officer had not had time to draw it before being shot. He then pumped two more shots into the first officer, then crawled into the hall to search for the retreating detective. He found him in the next room, and shot him again. Four of the bullets in this officer's body came from the revolver taken from the detective in the bedroom. Daniels then left the premises, assisted by the housekeeper. He was later captured.

Two remarkable aspects of this shooting stand out. The first is that Daniels' paraplegia didn't handicap him enough to keep him from being a deadly adversary, even to the point of pursuing the wounded detective into the next room. Despite Daniels' limited mobility, he covered ground quickly enough to catch the wounded officer. The other is that Daniels seems to have hit with every shot. He shot the first officer three times, and fired six bullets into the one he pursued into the next room. It was a deadly mistake to underestimate a paraplegic.

Equipment

Most police departments lack both tactical and equipment policies for plainclothes officers. Officers are allowed to select their plainclothes duty weapons the same way they choose their clothes. There may be a requirement that the weapon be chambered for department-issue ammunition, but usually this is to deal with supply and liability problems.

It's traditional for detectives to carry "snubbies," two-inch barrel revolvers. Indeed, one Colt Model dating back to the 1920s was called the "Detective Special," and was simply a cut-down version of the then-popular "Police Positive." The reasons for carrying a less effective weapon are that concealment is important, and that the officer will never need to use his weapon for real, anyway. The snubby is, in the minds of some, only a badge of office. This reinforces the complacent attitude.

Regulations usually mandate the type of belt, holster, and other gear that uniformed officers carry, but the plainclothes officer is pretty much on his own. Sometimes, administrators explain that they allow the officer

to choose and carry what's comfortable for him, but often this is simply defaulting on adopting a meaningful equipment policy. The officer's holster may have a grave defect, or he may be unskilled in its use. The officer may choose to carry his weapon in his briefcase or some other hard-to-reach place, and not encounter any corrective action from superior officers. The agency that provides body armor for patrol officers rarely provides any for detectives, except for bulky ballistic jackets used on raids.

Training

Large police agencies, such as the New York City Police Department, have training courses for those assigned to detective duty. Most don't, relying instead on "O.J.T." to get the job done. "Survival training" for plainclothes officers is almost nonexistent.

While much of the tactical training an officer receives carries over to plainclothes duty, firearms training is usually deficient. The detective may be allowed to carry almost any weapon he chooses, without having it checked out by the departmental armorer or firearms instructor. He also often does not get any instruction in the use of the weapon. Qualification may be on the same level as with the "off-duty" weapon, less often than with the service sidearm. To top it off, qualification scores demanded may be lower on the basis that a "snubby" is less accurate, anyway. This attitude carries over to some individual officers, who start to believe that they'll never have to fire a shot in anger.

The Big Picture

There's no single cause of unpreparedness among plainclothes officers. There are several interlocking causes, with different effects depending on the officer and the situation. However, there are ways to deal with these causes and to overcome their effects. In the rest of this book, we'll cover these one by one, to show you how to correct problems and enhance your chances of survival.

Chapter Six

TACTICS

Firearms training is only a basic step in learning how to survive a dangerous encounter. Marksmanship counts only after the gunfight has broken out. Good tactics can help you prevail in a gunfight, but more importantly, can prevent the gunfight altogether. If you practice good tactics, you can avoid giving a violent felon a target. Tactics can also neutralize the suspect before he can decide to resist.

A certain block of tactics applies to any armed encounter, but certain principles are most useful to situations in which plainclothes officers find themselves. Let's discuss tactics in general, and learn how to adapt them to plainclothes use.

Information

It's important to know as much as is useful about the suspect and his surroundings when approaching the scene. This is the first step in preparation. If the purpose is to serve an arrest warrant, you'll need to know if the subject has a history of violence, if he's armed, and if he's alone or with others. The larger agencies have computer-aided dispatch systems, and these provide information about the address to which a patrol officer is dispatched. If you're a plainclothes officer in such a department, make use of this information when available.

The layout of the premises will help determine the approach and will offer opportunities for placing the subject at a disadvantage before the confrontation starts. The subject's location in the building can affect your strategy.

Information about the subject's companions, if any, will be important. This will help you judge whether other people on the premises are likely to be bystanders or accomplices. If they're allied with the suspect, they may join in his efforts to resist arrest. This sort of reaction ought to suggest calling for reinforcements.

When off-duty, you're more likely to have information about the locales you and your family frequent. The main problem will be remaining

Figure 3. Walking in on a subject without planning can leave dangerous gaps. Plan your work; then work your plan.

alert. You probably know the owner of the local grocery store by sight, if not by first name. Taking a quick look inside the store before entering will give you a visual cue as to whether the situation is normal. If you see a stranger behind the counter, this may be a sign of something wrong. There also may be an innocent explanation for it, but it's worth being wary. Use the same alertness you would when on duty.

Cover

"Cover" means protection from gunfire, and it's important to distinguish this from "concealment," which means only protection from view. Many people confuse the two, and this can be fatal. One reason for the confusion is that instructors often don't bother to explain the difference. Another is "tube training," knowledge of gunfighting techniques picked up from watching television. The TV detectives kick in doors, stand behind flimsy interior walls for cover, and otherwise faithfully follow scripts written by people who don't understand the realities of armed encounters. The only consolation we have in this regard is that the bad guys watch TV, too, and pick up the same misinformation. Let's look at the real picture, and gain an appreciation of the tactical use of cover and concealment.

The Space-Time Cushion. Cover has several purposes. One is to protect you. Another is to buy time by creating a space-time cushion. If you're behind behind cover, you won't feel as pressured to open fire as if you were exposed, and in doubtful situations you can wait and sort out the situation.

Using a space-time cushion is basic to all gunfighting. It's simply good tactics to understand that space buys time, and vice-versa. Keeping a greater distance between yourself and a suspect increases the time it will take him to cross the space to attack you.

It works the other way in this manner: In a gunfight, time taken to reload provides a pause that allows the opponent to advance or retreat. Time also allows thinking out a situation, evaluating it, and deciding on the proper action. If you're good at thinking on your feet, you're lucky. If not, make sure you get as much time as possible.

A good example of this is the officer assigned to work the perimeter during an arrest. If he's behind cover, and he sees an unknown person leave the suspect's premises, he has the time to call out and order the person to stop and identify him- or herself. If he sees something in the person's hand, he can wait to determine exactly what it is, instead of being forced to assume it's a weapon and open fire. Without cover, he would feel pressured and might conclude that he had no choice.

There have been enough wrongful or doubtful shootings brought on by bad tactics that it's worth making an effort to reduce them. Following sound tactics helps minimize the urgency that can lead to hasty and wrong decisions.

You should try to develop a sense of "cover awareness." This is like playing "What if?" Everywhere you go, on duty or off-duty, look the scene over for possible cover. This is a game you can play even while

shopping or attending a birthday party. Make it a habit to check the surroundings for possible cover spots, and observe the fields of fire available from each. This will help you from being caught short if ever you face a deadly encounter.

It's hard to find absolute cover, a barricade so stout that it protects against any projectile. It's even harder to find it when and where you need it. There are many types of objects and materials that will serve as cover, and space doesn't allow listing them all. A few guidelines will have to do:

1. Interior walls aren't always paper-thin, but they won't reliably stop anything more powerful than an air rifle. "Drywall" doesn't offer much resistance to bullets. Number eight bird-shot, fired at a range of thirty feet or more from a cylindrical bore shotgun, won't go through both sides of two layers of drywall. The studs, nominally 2" × 4", are actually slightly less, and the long side, almost 4", will provide protection against medium-caliber handgun bullets. Unfortunately, studs are less than 2" thick, and spaced about 25" apart in interior walls.

An exception is using a longitudinal wall for cover. Taking cover at the end of a hallway, for example, places a stud between you and the gunfire for every twenty-five inches separating you.

2. Stone, brick, or block walls stop practically all handgun bullets and many rifle bullets. These materials are used for exterior walls in many parts of the country. They're also used for fencing around yards.

3. Stucco can be deceptive. This is a plaster-like coating used to finish exterior walls. Stucco over brick or cement block is a decorative finish, but more often stucco is applied over frames made of studs and chicken wire. The result looks like masonry, but is scarcely stouter than an interior wall. This is why it's smart to rap a stucco wall with the knuckles to test for a hollow sound.

4. Doors don't stop bullets. Most doors made today are "hollow-core" doors, with a thin wood veneer over cardboard honeycomb. Higher-quality "solid-core" doors are made of wood about 1½" thick, at most. This is stouter than a hollow-core door, but still won't stop most handgun bullets.

5. Most furniture won't stop handgun bullets.

6. Cars are good cover if properly used. The engine block, along with both sides of the bodywork, will stop most handgun bullets.

7. Metal structures, such as sinks, mailboxes, fire hydrants, and the like, offer some protection against handgun bullets. So do thick telephone and power poles. Some will even stop 30-caliber rifle bullets.

Figure 4. Use available cover. This officer presents a very small target to his opponent, and takes advantage of oblique cover of the wall's two-by-fours. The row of studs will stop almost any bullet at that angle.

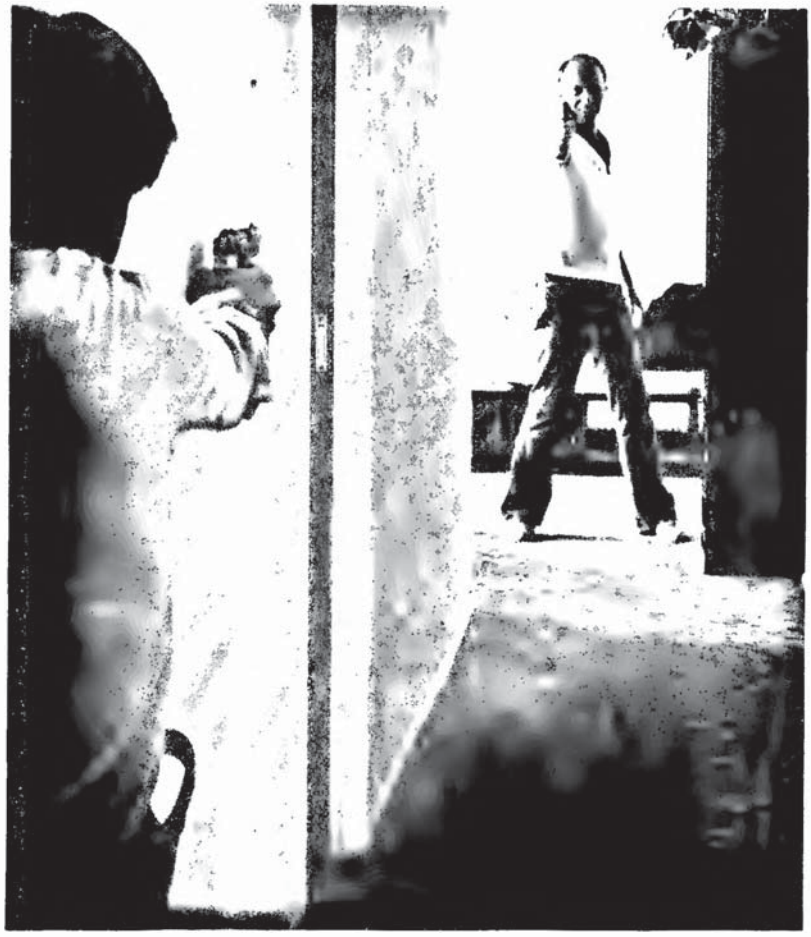


Figure 5A. The suspect, by contrast, is in full view. This compensates for the officer's small error in resting his gun hand against the wall.

These are just rough guides, with many exceptions. An opponent may have a .357 Magnum revolver, but loaded with .38 Specials. There are regular and high-speed loads within the same caliber.

Making Good Use Of Cover. Most of what we see and what we're taught about cover is wrong. In both real life and media presentations, we see police officers snuggling up to cover and peering around the side. They fire while resting an arm or hand against the cover. The police "barricade" position is a good example, and it's totally wrong. Let's see why:

This position, with the officer close to the barricade, limits his move-

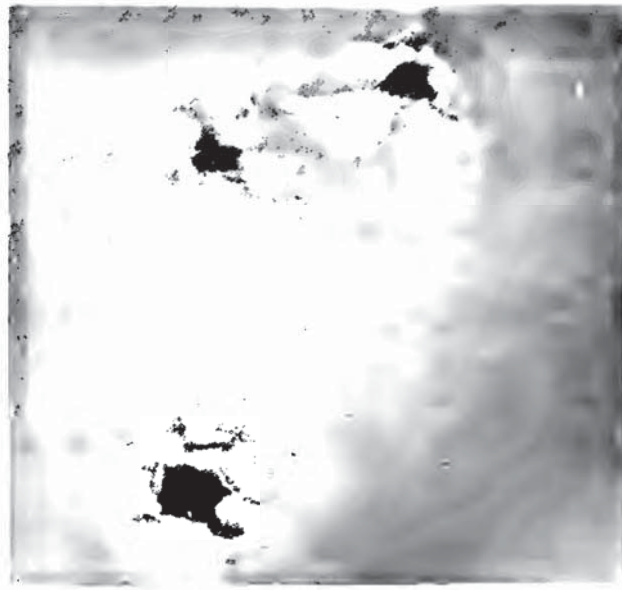


Figure 5B. An interior wall won't stop much fired directly at it. This rear view of a piece of "drywall" shows penetration by 29-grain .22-caliber bullets at about 650 feet per second.

ment and makes it harder to fire and duck back. From the front, the officer makes a small target, but there are problems because it takes longer to assume the position. Let's look at his gun hand, though.

Resting the weapon hand against the barricade makes it harder and slower to get into position. Recoil scrapes the hand against the barricade. Let's look at a better way:

Keeping behind the barricade, never touching it, is better. From the front, the officer is no more exposed.

Staying well behind the barricade allows popping out to see and shoot, then ducking back behind cover more quickly than if the officer kept physical contact with the barricade. Aiming the weapon is much quicker, and well worth sacrificing the slight extra steadiness provided by the support. Keep in mind that your target's likely to be a large one, and pin-point accuracy won't be necessary.

When shooting from behind cover, it's unwise to pop out at the same point each time. This allows an opponent to anticipate where you'll show next, line up his sights, and fire much more quickly than if he had to search for you.

Figure 6. What's wrong with resting the gun hand on the barricade? It takes an extra split second to do so; that's what's wrong. Another point is that this officer has to lean too far out to get both hands in that position. Firing from the left, ejected shells may hang up and jam the weapon.

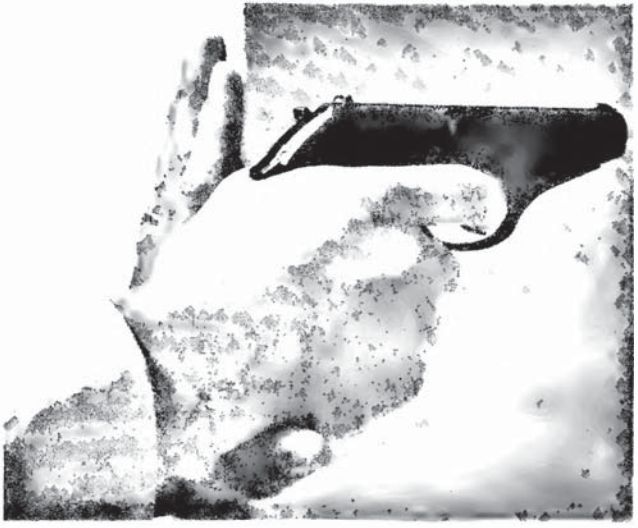


Figure 7. This version of the barricade position is even worse because it requires resting the palm against the wall. It's slower yet.

Figure 8. When the officer keeps behind the barricade, he doesn't waste time getting into an elaborate position. To observe, he simply pops out momentarily. The next time he wants a peek, he pops his head out at a different level.

It's also important to form a firm habit of reloading and clearing jams from behind cover. A gunfight doesn't stop just because you run dry or your primer fails to pop. Breaking cover while reloading, and therefore defenseless, is hazardous.

In a gunfight, don't abandon your cover to rush the suspects, or even to accept their surrender. If the suspect is down, take your time before breaking cover. He may be faking it. If the suspect wants to give up, make him come to you. Order him to turn around and walk backward as you direct. At the point you choose, have him "prone out" on the ground, arms extended and palms up.

If you must move after the shooting has started, plan your move in advance. Move in bounds from one cover to another. Once you start running, don't stop to look around or to return fire. A few gifted people can fire accurately while running. Unless you're one of these experts, don't even try it if someone is shooting at you.

Positioning and Movement

Stance is a basic tactic. Stand or sit with the weapon side somewhat away from the subject. This isn't as important as it is for uniformed officers who wear their weapons exposed. A vital point for plainclothes officers, however, is not to have the hands encumbered in case the situation turns violent.

Figure 9. To shoot, he pops out and pulls the trigger. He's exposed for only as long as it takes to shoot.

For example, do you take a portable radio with you? Do you carry it in your gun hand? You'll spend an uncomfortable second or two deciding what to do with the radio if you have to draw your weapon.

What, if anything, do you carry in your hands when close to a subject or suspect? It should always be something that you won't hesitate to drop if it becomes necessary to fight or draw a weapon. A cheap notebook and

Figure 10. Why tie up the gun hand when interrogating a suspect? This slows the officer down if he needs to draw. The portable radio has a belt clip. It's there to use!

pencil are expendable. You won't have any problem dropping these if necessary.

Dividing Attention. Dividing the subject's attention can make a critical difference to the outcome of an armed affray. It can also prevent one.

Figure 11. If it becomes necessary to drop the notebooks and pencils to draw a weapon, there won't be the problem there would be in deciding whether or not to drop a $2,000 radio.

A subject may, in some situations, feel that he can "take" both officers if they remain in front of him. Officers who spread out so that the subject is at the apex of an angle of at least 90 degrees force the subject to divide his attention. This should be a standard tactic if you work with a partner.

Spreading Out. The more distance between the two of you, the more trouble the subject has in keeping you both in his field of view. He'll find it harder to start an attack. When using this tactic, be careful not to exceed an angle of about 120 degrees, because you and your partner will be getting in each others' field of fire. Use another version of this tactic to control multiple subjects. While interviewing, you may arrange for your subjects to stand or sit near each other so that you don't have to turn your head to look at one or the other. Your partner can take a position several feet behind you and to one side, far enough to force the subject or

Figure 12. Another standard tactic in handling a subject is to force him to divide his attention by spreading out.

subjects to turn to look at each of you. This also has a psychological advantage if you alternate in asking questions. Another tactic is for the officer nearest the subject to question him, while the other stays back to observe. With two or more subjects, it's hard both to ask questions and to pay full attention to observing the others. Your silent partner's task, therefore, is to look for attempts to dispose of evidence or obtain weapons.

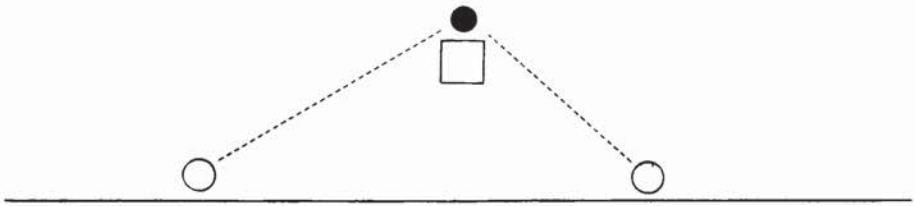
When interviewing a subject, an angle of 120 degrees is enough to prevent the subject's keeping you both in view. If you're doing the questioning, you can reinforce this by keeping good eye contact with the subject. It may be too heavy-handed or offensive to say "Look at me when I'm talking to you," especially if the subject is not under serious suspicion. However, we tend to look at people who are looking at us, and making use of this psychological fact is good tactics.

Any experienced infantryman knows that "bunching up" simply provides an easy target for an enemy. Yet, people tend to bunch up in anticipation of danger. This is normal reaction because people feel more secure when close to a partner or ally. This instinctive behavior was appropriate when the only weapons available were fists, stones, clubs,

and swords. Closing up provided mutual support. Firearms have made this tactic counterproductive.

Bunching up may be permissible when behind cover. In the open, it's a serious error. It provides an opponent with a concentrated set of targets. A miss on one is likely to score a hit on another.

Bunching up nullifies any chance of catching an adversary in a cross-fire.



CROSSFIRE

Figure 13. Crossfire is a very powerful tactic. It enables a pair of combatants to catch an opponent from two directions at once. Cross-fire can even menace an adversary who is behind cover.

Cross-Fire. Firing directly at an adversary offers him the opportunity to take cover behind a solid object. It also allows him to return fire at one target. Firing obliquely gets behind the cover. Firing from two directions forces him to fight two opponents, and puts him at a tactical disadvantage.

Doorways and Windows. Doorways and windows can be tactical choke-points, or they can open up additional fields of observation or fire. From the previous discussion, we have seen how spreading out makes it more difficult for a subject to put up an effective defense if a fight develops. It's easier for the resisting suspect to control the situation if he can keep both officers within a small angle of view, and a doorway allows him to do just that. A doorway "canalizes" the officers' approach and increases their vulnerability. Let's recall the incident previously described, in which two officers canalized in a doorway were attacked by a subject with a 9mm auto pistol.

Handling doorways poses a different problem for plainclothes officers than it does for uniformed and S.W.A.T. teams. S.W.A.T. officers can use an explosive entry, or shoot the lock off, and throw in a gas or stun grenade. Unless the subject has already made a hostile move or you're executing a high-risk warrant service, the approach and entry must remain discreet and inoffensive. There are some simple precautions you can take.

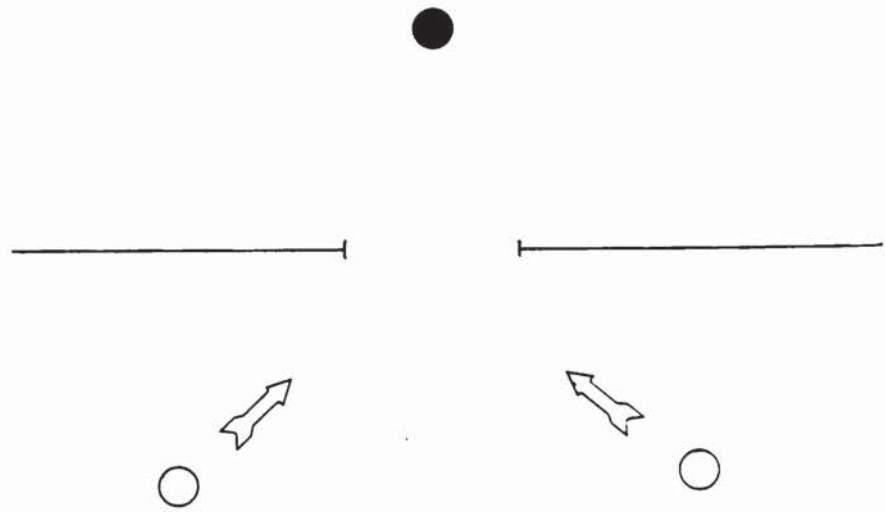


Figure 14. Why doorways can be dangerous: Instead of allowing the officers to spread out, it forces them to converge to enter. It "canalizes" their approach. This is why it's far better to entice a subject out of a room instead of going in after him.

One is that you should never both stand directly in front of a door, open or closed. This makes you easy targets because of bunching up. In normal situations, one officer must stand at least partly in front of the door to be seen when he flashes his I.D. The other should stand to the side or down the hall, but should make his presence known by speaking.

Keeping to one side of a doorway offers some protection. The flimsy interior walls usually used in buildings don't stop bullets, but they protect from view. The suspect intent on resisting may have some doubt because he can't see both officers. The air of vague menace offered by an unseen opponent may act as a deterrent, causing the subject to stop and think before becoming aggressive.

Outside walls are often more substantial, but some are not, especially if they're of stucco and chicken-wire construction. When calling at a one or two-family house, the officer ringing the bell doesn't really need his partner at his side. A position behind or inside the car, behind cover and close to the radio, may be tactically better. If the normal practice is to carry a shotgun or carbine in the car, the second officer remains near the weapon in case the need arises. A subject contemplating aggression can't hope to shoot both officers, and it takes only a little imagination to understand that the officer at the car has access to a radio to call for help.

Windows offer at least three possibilities. They're ways for a subject to

see anyone approaching, but likewise they allow an officer to see in. A window can also serve as an escape route for a desperate suspect on the verge of arrest. They also allow officers to shoot in with bullets or gas projectiles if an encounter turns violent.

Going in through doors requires tactical finesse. If it's necessary for you to enter to interview the subject, you should never go in together, bunching up in the doorway. The first officer should enter, and speak with the subject while he's walking. The second officer, laying back, should listen alertly for changes in tone of voice that can suggest something amiss. Once he's satisfied that the first officer is in safely, he can proceed. The first officer, in turn, observes the subject and the surroundings carefully to cover his partner's entry.

Tactical Movement. In approaching a new locale or situation, it's worth looking for cover, even if you don't think you'll need it. The worst time to start seeking cover is when someone opens fire on you.

When approaching corners or blind spots, such as deep doorways, keep in mind that these offer good ambush points. Don't rush around corners, as they allow an ambusher to trip you or to swing at you with a club, catching you unaware.

Don't creep up to a corner, either, slinking along the wall. Staying too close allows an opponent to reach out and grab you before you can react. If you lead with your weapon, he can snatch it.

You can cut the risks of ambush by an attacker waiting around a corner by taking all corners wide, as wide as the corridor allows. This creates distance between yourself and a possible attacker, giving you a space-time cushion to react. Some instructors call this "slicing the pie."

When serving an arrest warrant, you should never let yourself be stampeded into tactically unsound moves. A suspect who answers the door, then breaks and runs for an exit, may be alone or with an accomplice. Your normal impulse will be to pursue and catch him. If you sacrifice all tactical principles to rush after him, you may be setting yourself up for an ambush. If the suspect has a gun stashed in the next room, it's almost certain that he'll reach it before you do. When he turns to open fire, he'll have a clear shot if you're bunched up in the doorway.

The confusion that occurs when everybody tries to get through the doorway at once can wreck any tactical plan.

If you see a possibility of the subject's escaping, blocking the escape route is tactically more sound than chasing the suspect and entering a

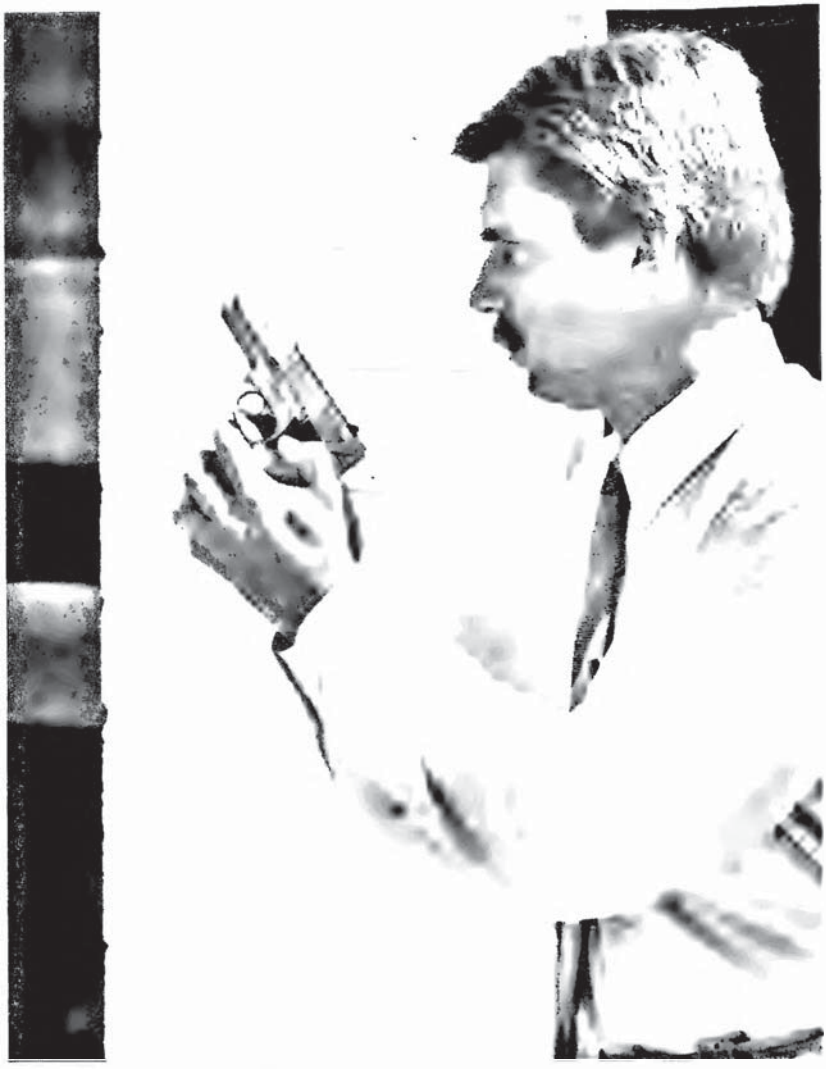


Figure 15. Slinking along the wall, with the weapon out front, is TV Cop tactics. This officer seems wary, but here's an example of what can happen.

possible ambush. This requires at least one extra officer stationed where he can cover the escape route or routes. This officer should be behind cover, and the tactic should be to let the escaping suspect come to him rather than have any officer exposed. At the appropriate moment, the covering officer can order the suspect to "FREEZE!"

Figure 16. A suspect pops out from around the corner and snatches the weapon. Creeping along the wall nullifies the space-time cushion.

Figure 17. Colliding in the doorway is Keystone Kops tactics! Not only is this approach canalized, but they're hung up in the danger zone.

Endangering Innocent Parties

In built-up areas, officers must always be concerned with the danger to bystanders. This is often what inhibits police gunfire, although felons don't usually worry about endangering innocent parties. Some suspects depend on heavy firepower, and this can be very dangerous for bystanders. This brings us back to cover. Taking cover, and not presenting the suspect with a good target, is one way of inhibiting his gunfire.

A reasonable precaution is clearing the area in case of a high-risk arrest. This requires judgment, because many arrests fitting into the "high-risk" category don't involve violence. A show of overwhelming force at the outset can convince the offender that resistance is useless.

A basic step is avoiding the need for gunfire. Showing up at the door of an armed and dangerous suspect can bring about a violent reaction. A telephone call, after arresting officers are in place, gives the suspect no target and can convince him that he has no chance of escape.

"Talking the suspect down" is infinitely preferable to shooting it out because of the prospect of wild shots, as well as direct danger to both officers and suspects. If it's possible to anticipate a dangerous arrest, a negotiator can sometimes resolve the situation without violence.

Timing of the Arrest

There are different schools of thought regarding arrest timing. Some feel that an early-morning arrest is best because it catches the suspect at his lowest ebb, before he's fully awake. Others state that an arrest in the evening, when the suspect is tired, is best.

Location

If there's any chance of choosing the location of the arrest, go for it. The worst place to arrest anyone is on home ground. In the case of an armed suspect, there are probably more weapons at his home or hideaway. Luring him outdoors, or waiting until he leaves, are far better ways to set up an arrest. Having the suspect outside deprives him of cover, and allows surrounding him with overwhelming force. Choosing the right moment also reduces or eliminates the opportunity to take hostages.

Some large and well-funded detective operations set up "arrest shops" which are stings to which they lure the suspects. There have been several instances of officers sending specially-printed letters and advertisements to suspects, telling them that they had won a prize. When they showed up to collect, officers arrested them.

Tactics Make It or Break It

The old saying, "It's not what you've got; it's what you do with it that counts," applies very strongly to plainclothes survival. You may be outnumbered. You may be out-gunned. If you allow a subject to out-think you, you're throwing away your best advantage. Use good tactics, and you'll improve your chances of surviving a dangerous encounter.

Chapter Seven

CLOSE COMBAT

There are certain situations in which some of the normal rules and procedures don't work. The two-handed grip on the handgun becomes both useless and dangerous. Cover, while attractive, is too far away. This is the grim world of close combat.

You might be facing a suspect when he goes for a weapon. You may be in line at a bank when a robbery "comes down." These are typical of situations in which an attacker can be within touching distance. Proximity makes him very, very dangerous because he can reach you with anything; a gun, knife, club, or fist. This allows you very little time in which to react.

If you're in a store when a robber enters, you have time to think, and to plan. A basic decision is whether or not to identify yourself and try to apprehend the robber on the spot. The risk to bystanders may suggest waiting until the robber leaves, and trying to "take" him outside, where there's less danger to others.

If you're forced to react, there's no time to think. The time for thinking is over. You have to have some preprogrammed decisions to guide you through the next couple of split-seconds if you want to survive.

Basic Strategies of Close Combat

We can boil down the various techniques to a very few basic principles. Understanding these is vital before we can go on to discuss the specifics.

Surprise. This is more than half the battle. A smaller and weaker adversary can, by a surprise attack, defeat a larger and stronger one. The main point is to avoid letting a suspect surprise you, and to use surprise yourself, if you have to use force.

Distance. Space means time and safety. Keeping your distance, if the situation allows it, creates lag time between the moment an attack starts and when it reaches you. This helps overcome surprise.

Control. Distance isn't everything, and it will sometimes be impossible to keep a safe distance away. If it's necessary to stay close to the subject,

you need to maintain control of the situation. Some experienced close combat specialists prefer to stay close, to "crowd" a subject, and not give him room to develop an attack. You'll have to decide which style you prefer for yourself.

Prevention

It's smarter to avoid or prevent the situation than to have to cope with it in a few frenzied split-seconds. Because of the nature of plainclothes duty, the normal officer survival techniques don't always apply. You can't always stand two or three steps away from the subject, as you would if you were giving him a traffic citation. You're likely to be in a hallway or small room, with a wall at your back to keep you from creating distance you need for survival.

You might expect an armed attack, or a subject who will use his fists and feet. Either way, it can be dangerous. A single subject may have second thoughts about starting a fist-fight against two officers. There is strength in numbers in this regard. He might be able to surprise and overcome the officer nearest him, but the second will have time to act, if he stays alert.

An armed subject won't necessarily feel that being outnumbered means outfought. As we've seen, some subjects won't hesitate to start shooting when outnumbered, because they feel they have the advantage of surprise.

Using your eyes and common sense can save a lot of trouble. Staying mentally alert can give you an edge if you scan the subject and the area around him. A weapon might be under a seat cushion. In an interview, it's not possible to impose control over the subject and his actions as in an arrest. A subject who says he or she needs to go to the bathroom may be really going for a weapon, or planning to escape. Your only defenses are to remain alert and to take up a position to forestall any offensive or evasive actions. Another precaution is to shift your position, so that the subject won't find you in the same location upon reentering the room. This minor precaution can give you the advantage of surprise if the subject is planning an attack, and an "edge" of half a second or more.

If it's an arrest, you already should know about the subject's offense and history. A record of violence is a definite warning, and if you ignore it you're on thin ice. This makes keeping an eye on the subject's hands and his clothing even more important, as there may be a weapon tucked into the belt under his jacket. You also ought to decide, and quickly, whether or not you're facing a "street-smart" subject.

Handling the Street-smart Subject

You can expect the street-smart subject to be much more tricky than one who isn't. He'll try to outwit you, to fake you out, and possibly to outfight you if he thinks he can get away with it.

The street-smart subject is likely to try to deflect your questions with an accusation of bigotry if he's a minority member. Alternatively, he'll make a show of submissiveness to calm your suspicion if he's planning an attack. He may even smile warmly as he sidles up within striking distance. Schooled in practical psychology, the street-smart attacker will perhaps ask you a question just before he attacks, to unhook your "mental trigger." This is the distraction technique, and it can work even if you're ready for it.

The reason it can work is that it forces you to think and to make a conscious decision. Even if you're holding a suspect at gun-point, you can't open fire because he asks you a question. You have to decide whether this is the start of an attack, and to take steps to cope with the attack with minimal force.

One way to handle the distraction technique without overreacting is to grab the subject's hands. Proximity can work against the subject as well as against the police officer. A better way is to keep your distance and tell him curtly: "No talking!"

If it's necessary to move in to handcuff and search him, it's vital to gain and keep control of the suspect. The wall search is obsolete because knowledge of how to wrest control from the officer has become widespread among career criminals. One technique is to push off from the wall. Another is to grab the searching officer's hand and use it to pull upright again, then twist him to the ground with a leg-hook.

Keeping control of the suspect requires having him turn away from you and place his hands behind his head or waist, and ordering him to lace his fingers. You can then approach him, cautiously keeping your weapon close to your side to make it harder to grab if he should decide to turn on you. You should have your weak hand extended to grab several of his fingers for a pain compliance hold, if necessary.

Only then should you put your handgun away. Reinforce this hold by handcuffing the suspect immediately, before starting the search. This gives you an extra margin of safety, but you should still keep hold of his fingers because this will give you early warning if he starts to move while you're distracted with the search, and will let you use pain compliance to

keep control. If you don't have enough "reach" to search his ankles comfortably, order the subject to lift his feet back towards you, one at a time. This technique has the additional advantage of reducing his balance more, facilitating control.

After an arrest, the street-smart subject is likely to try to fake you out by making offensive remarks as you search him. One trick is to hide a weapon or contraband in the groin area, hoping that the search won't be very thorough. This is the point at which the suspect will say something like:

"Is this how you get your jollies, feeling me up?"

This alerts you that the suspect may have something hidden in his groin area. You need to use extra care in searching, and ignore his comments except to tell him again: "No talking!"

Having a partner along helps greatly in keeping control of a suspect. The suspect can't turn on you both if he decides to resist. One of you must run the risk of getting close to handcuff and search the suspect, but the other remains far out of reach, about six or ten feet away, and ready to back you up.

Hand to Hand

An assaultive subject is more likely to attack you with his fists than with a firearm. It's therefore important to know basic hand-to-hand combat. Unfortunately, if you're like most police officers, you don't have a black belt in a martial art. You probably haven't practiced the basic defensive tactics they taught you at the academy.

It's a serious mistake not to keep up on hand-to-hand combat skills. There have been enough officers killed and seriously injured by fists and feet to make this a serious danger. However, if you don't keep in regular practice, understanding a few basic moves well enough to carry them out well is better than a slight knowledge of many complicated techniques that you won't be able to use when the chips are down.

You should be mentally prepared for a hard struggle. Keep in mind that if a bullet can't be guaranteed to put an attacker down instantly, a kick or punch is likely to be even less effective. It's common for adversaries to trade many punches or kicks before one goes down.

Stance. It's important to keep a well-balanced stance, preferably with one foot slightly forward, to make it harder for an opponent to get you off-balance by a blow, push, or a "rush." Equally important is distance. Keeping just out of reach prevents the "sucker punch" or knee to the

groin that some street fighters use to start an attack. A small piece of furniture between you and the subject is an obstacle that helps discourage or slow down an unarmed attack..

Figure 18. If it becomes necessary to draw your weapon to control the subject, use a one-hand grip while keeping the other arm out in a "guard" position. This allows you to push him off if he lunges. Open up the distance between you to forestall attacks.

The only time you should close in with an opponent is when you need to be within reach of his hands to prevent his drawing a weapon. In such a case, it's very helpful to have a partner standing off to one side and within reach. If you're within range of a punch or kick, beware of a knee to the groin. Keeping your body slightly turned makes this more difficult for your opponent.

If you have something in your hand, it can be a problem if the subject attacks. You may lose a split-second deciding whether to put it down or drop it so that you can draw a weapon. Avoid this problem by a "mental trigger" to throw it in your opponent's face in an attack. It probably won't stop him, especially if it's something light, such as a notebook, but it can help confuse him. He'll certainly blink if he sees something coming towards his eyes. In any event you certainly can't

be liable for using excessive force for throwing a notebook in his face.

Blows. At very close range, it may be awkward to try to use fists and feet. The elbow is a natural weapon, and more effective than many people realize. In swinging the elbow, you need to avoid hitting with the tip of the elbow if you're only in shirt-sleeves because you can injure yourself that way. Instead, use the front or rear flat sections of your elbows. If you're wearing a jacket or coat, the padding will protect you.

The best part about the elbow swing is that you can use a forehand or backhand blow effectively. Swinging an elbow into the jaw delivers a powerful blow. You can back up and hit him on the return swing very quickly. This is a very important point, because it almost always takes more than one blow to put an adversary down.

Figure 19. At close quarters, a swing with the elbow is effective, and allows another swing as a follow-up tactic.

There are many vulnerable areas on the human body, but don't expect to hit one immediately. Close combat is so frenzied that few can aim their blows accurately. The best technique is to aim for an area, such as the face. A couple of elbow smashes can break the nose, teeth, or even the jaw.

Even close-in, you can use your fist to deliver an uppercut to the face. All you need is a few inches' clearance between your adversary's body and yours. The uppercut is very effective because even without extensive practice, you can put enough power into this blow to rock his head back.

Figure 20. An uppercut to the jaw jars the skull. Don't, however, use the fist, as you can hurt your knuckles that way. The heel of the hand works equally well, and allows you to cup his chin for a firmer impact.

Lower down, driving an elbow into the solar plexus can disable the attacker if the blow is hard enough. This requires that you turn from the attacker to set up for the blow. It's very effective if the attacker is already to your side or behind you. Keep this in mind if you allow yourself to be ambushed going through a doorway.

A kick to the shin or instep produces pain and can break bones if delivered with enough force. If you stomp down hard, putting your weight into it, you can crush the bones of your attacker's foot at the instep.

A "knee lift" into the groin can be disabling, for obvious reasons. This is a quick defense against a front choke or a follow-up to a front disarm.

In using blows, keep in mind the advice given by baton instructors.

Figure 21. If the suspect grabs for your throat or for your weapon, an elbow jab to the solar plexus breaks up the attack.

Deliver hard blows, to put the attacker down quickly. You can save yourself or your partner from injury by disabling the subject before he can harm you. Also keep in mind the effect of your actions on witnesses, if any. Think about how courtroom testimony that you kept on hitting the subject sounds. An attorney speaking to a jury unaware of the realities of the street can make it seem like a typical case of "police brutality."

Pressure Points. One very good pressure point is under the angle of the jaw. You can press up using only one finger and deliver enough pressure to cause intense pain. This is one way of forcing a release from a bear hug, front choke, or front weapon grab. It's also a quick and convenient method of forcing an uncooperative person up out of a chair.

Another pressure point is the testicles, which are very vulnerable to pressure or a squeeze. This can break up a frontal attack.

Holds. Few holds are worth learning, because they are complicated and difficult to apply. Others, such as the front collar strangle, leave you

Figure 22. An attack from the side as you come through a doorway requires a quick solar plexus jab with the elbow as a countermove.

wide open to counterattacks. Let's look at a few simple ones which you can learn to use in a pinch:

The finger spread is a come-along, but you can use it to disable an opponent by increasing the pressure until bones break. You grasp the thumb with one hand and the little finger with the other, and spread them. As a come-along, you can keep the subject's elbow tucked under your armpit, but this isn't essential.

The wrist lock is useful for putting an opponent down. You grab his hand and turn it palm up, grabbing his wrist with both hands and pressing your thumbs into the back of his hand. If you've got an inside wrist lock, with his arm folded in towards his body, pressing hard will put him down on his knees. If it's an outside wrist lock, with his arm away from his body and towards his rear, he'll go down on his face.

Counters. A "counter" is a way to get out of a hold, or to react against an

Figure 23. Another quick defense against an attack from the side or rear is the instep stamp. Drive your heel hard into the top of his foot. This will break the tarsal bones if you do it hard.

aggression. One of the simplest is the counter to a chest push. The attacker pushes against your chest with his open palm, fingers up. Place both your hands over his, trapping them, and bend sharply forward at the waist. He'll go down on his knees very quickly. You can follow up with a knee to the face.

Breaking a front choke isn't as hard as it seems, if you have both hands free for a front wedge. Clasp your hands together and drive them up forcefully between your attacker's arms. This will force his arms apart and break the hold. Follow up by striking both sides of his neck with the sides of your hands, rabbit-punch style.

An attacker may take you by surprise with a "rush." This can start with a feint towards your face. He then puts his head down, charges, and bowls you over with a butt into your stomach. The counter to this is to roll with the attack, grabbing his clothing or arms firmly as you're going

Figure 24. A quick defense against a frontal attack is the knee into the groin.

down. Bring one or both feet up into his stomach, and kick out when you're down, at the same time pulling him up over your head with your hands. The least you can expect is avoiding being pinned down, because you'll have tossed him away from you. If your timing is right, though, you'll send him in a spectacular flying spin, and the shock of the landing will take the fight out of him. This is called the "overhead throw."

Partners. Two officers working together can quickly control an attacker. The basic strategy is similar to that for an armed encounter. Spreading out makes it more difficult for the subject to attack both of you. If he focuses his attack on your partner, you move in from the side and try to gain control of an arm. A wrist lock will force him to the ground quickly.

You can use the pressure point at the angle of the jaw to bring the subject's head up and back, breaking up his attack. With one hand at the back of his head, and the other with the finger under the jaw, you can quickly slam him down on the ground if the situation demands it.

If the attack against your partner is serious, a quick rear take-down is the collar take-down. You grab the subject's collar from the rear, pulling hard towards you. At the same time, you kick at the back of one knee

Figure 25. Pressing with the finger under the angle of the jaw causes pain to force an attacker's head back. To find the exact point, probe under your jaw with your finger. You'll find it easily.

to break his balance. Follow through by slamming him down onto the ground.

Deflect or Disarm?

This is the basic decision, because it leads naturally to one or another follow-up. Everything depends on the offender's being within reach. Deflection or disarming techniques don't work on an opponent who keeps his distance. If he comes within about three feet, you have a chance, and a choice.

Figure 26. Grabbing the fingers and spreading them will break the hand quickly. It doesn't matter if you grab two fingers in each hand, or just the thumb and little finger. Either will cause intense pain and destroy use of that hand.

You deflect the weapon when you're preparing to draw your own, and need another split-second to clear your weapon. The deflection can be a simple slash at the attacker's forearm with you own.

The purpose is to protect you while you step out of reach and draw your weapon. If the attacker has a firearm, you're not really out of reach, but if it's a club or knife you force him to restructure his attack.

When your weapon clears, you don't raise it for a two-handed grip, because there's no time. You also don't want to place it within the suspect's reach to allow him to deflect it or disarm you. Instead, you keep it close to your side and fire as soon as you feel that it's lined up with your attacker. This is known as a "hip shot."

The problem with deflection is that you don't retain control of the weapon. This can be dangerous if you have to draw your weapon from under clothing or from an ankle holster. It can take several seconds to reach under your coat, jacket, and sweater, work the thumbsnap, and disengage the gun from the holster and surrounding clothing. You

Figure 27. The inside wrist lock can start as a defense to the suspect's grabbing your collar or necktie. You grab his hand with both of yours, thumbs pressing his palm back towards him, and twist his hand out and down, forcing him to the ground.

also might not have the extra hand free to deflect the felon's weapon. This can happen if you're forced into a two-handed draw by the type of carry system you're wearing. If you're wearing a shoulder holster under a jacket and overcoat, both buttoned up, it's hopeless. The offender won't allow you the time to unbutton and unzip. Likewise with an ankle holster. If you need to lift the trouser leg to draw, the adversary will have enough time to renew the attack. You might decide that it's

faster to go for a disarm with both hands instead of trying to draw your weapon.

The advantage of a disarm is that it's very quick, and you gain control of the adversary's weapon. The distinction is very important. Deflecting is just brushing it aside. A disarm requires you to grab the weapon and/or the controlling hand, to prevent the opponent from pulling it away and lining up again.

Disarming relies upon "body mechanics." Whether the attacker is at the front or rear, you need first to locate the weapon. You then twist your trunk or use foot-work to get your body out of the line of fire, if the weapon is a firearm, and grab the weapon with both hands to gain control. The decisive move is to twist it out of the attacker's hand, to one side, or by turning it upward towards the opponent's head. The critical point here is to keep hold of the weapon, not send it flying across the room. The reason you must avoid this is that it can lead to a mad scramble for the weapon. Once you've got the weapon, you should back off and assert control of the situation.

Figure 28. The outside wrist lock starts the same way, but you jerk his hand down and towards you and put pressure on his elbow. A blow will break his arm at the elbow.

In choosing a disarming technique, be careful not to try anything which is too complicated. There are many disarms taught by martial arts experts which require great skill, because they're for use by other martial arts experts. When your life's at stake, you need to keep it simple.

A good source of simple and easy to understand disarming techniques is the videotape, "Realistic Firearms Disarming," by John Peters. This costs $69.95, and one is available from: Reliapon Police Products, P.O. Box 14872, Station G NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111, Phone: (800) 423-0668, att: John G. Peters.

Figure 29. If the subject is very aggressive and shoves you in the chest, one quick counter is to place both hands over his, pinning it to your chest. When you bend forward, against his wrist, he'll drop to his knees. The follow-up is a knee to his chin.

Some instructors advise using a distraction technique before the start of the disarm. Speaking to the suspect to occupy his mind, and then asking him a question is the usual advice. Unfortunately, this can work both ways. It can take the subject's attention away for a vital split-second. This is what we call "unhooking his mental trigger." It can also serve as a warning, and set him off.

Which do you choose, deflect or disarm? It's really up to you. Which is the one which makes you more comfortable? Which provides more confidence? Which one will you practice until you can do it without thinking?

Close Means Danger

The New York City Police Department's study, SOP-9, showed that of the 254 New York City police officers killed feloniously in the line of duty from 1854 to 1979, 81 percent were killed by assailants within six feet or closer. Surviving an attack depends very much on keeping a space-time cushion between yourself and a potentially dangerous subject. When this is impossible, as we have seen, special techniques can help prevent or defeat an attack.

Figure 30. The front wedge counters a choking attack. If you clasp both hands to form a wedge of your forearms, driving them up between your attacker's arms forces them apart and off your neck. Follow up with blows to his neck, or clap your palms hard against his ears.

Figure 31. If you go down, you can pull your attacker with you and, by grabbing his hands or hips, set him up for a foot in the stomach. Use his momentum to throw him over your head.

Figure 32. The rear collar take-down is quick and devastating. You grab his collar, kick into his knee with the side of your foot, and slam him down hard against the pavement. This degree of force is justified against a deadly attack.

Figure 33. One defense against a knife attack is to deflect it, slamming your arm down against his wrist, and driving your elbow into his jaw. Stepping into the attack provides safety.

Figure 34. Against a close-in attack with a gun, deflect it with one hand while delivering an uppercut against his jaw with the heel of your other hand. This is what you have to do when there's no time to draw and fire.

Figure 35. Looking at it from the other viewpoint shows why holding a weapon on someone from too close makes you vulnerable. The two-handed grip is a suicide stance here, because it allows the suspect to come in under it with another attack.

Figure 36. Alternately, the suspect can grab for your weapon, which you're so conveniently holding out to him.

Figure 37. Following up on a weapon deflection. Your left arm has pushed his knife hand away while your right hand goes for your weapon. The important point is not to give him room to withdraw and try again. Keep crowding him.

Figure 38. When you draw, fire as soon as the muzzle is lined up. This hip shot avoids presenting the weapon for him to grab.

Figure 39. The two-step disarm. The first step is to gain control of the weapon and stun the attacker with an elbow to the jaw. The second step is to consolidate the half wrist lock and force him to drop the knife.

Chapter Eight

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Detectives and other plainclothes officers, on or off-duty, confront special situations quite different from the ones facing patrol officers.

On-Duty

Plainclothes officers sometimes face especially dangerous situations precisely because of their elite status. In some agencies, criminal investigators have a status very much like that of uniformed officers. Assignment to the criminal investigation bureau is much like any other assignment, a temporary posting on the way up the career ladder.

In other departments, the detectives occupy a special place of honor. Posting to detectives is actually a promotion. They only receive their assignments on the basis of their experience and notable performance on the job. In New York City, for example, detectives receive higher pay and gold badges.

Formally or informally, in many agencies detectives tend to be the elite force. Because of this elite status they're the ones police administrators call to carry out especially difficult tasks.

Face to Face

One example was that of Vincent Heffernan, a New York City Police Department detective working out of the 23rd. Squad. A gunman named August Robles was barricaded on an upper floor of an apartment house in East Harlem. Police units had evacuated residents of nearby buildings, and with Fire Department units had set up barricades to keep innocent parties from wandering into the scene of the intense shootout. Vincent Heffernan got the nasty job of going in and neutralizing Robles before he did any more damage.

Heffernan put on body armor and walked into the apartment. The exchange of shots left Heffernan wounded and Robles dead. The detective recovered from his wounds and returned to duty.

Another incident occurred in the Federal Court House in New York City, where an armed man took a cleaning woman hostage. He demanded to see a bankruptcy commissioner. New York City officers responded, and an Emergency Service Division officer named John Mulligan donned judges' robes. He was accompanied by Richard Condon, a detective in civilian clothes, who hid a five-shot revolver in his sock and posed as a lawyer. Mulligan persuaded the gunman to allow Condon into the office where he had barricaded himself with his hostage. Condon persuaded the gunman to release the hostage. At an opportune moment, Condon drew his pistol and emptied it at the gunman, five feet away across a desk. The gunman's weapon turned out to be a starter's pistol. According to Condon, only one of his five shots hit, but this was enough. The gunman went down, and later died in the hospital.

These encounters are theoretically and tactically wrong, but they happen. While it's easy to say that the S.W.A.T. Team is the proper police unit to handle a barricaded suspect, many of the smaller agencies don't have one. In medium-sized agencies, the S.W.A.T. Team is made up of officers assigned to other duties when they're not needed for S.W.A.T. This includes detectives.

In Tempe, Arizona, a Juvenile Sergeant named Ralph Tranter was "called out" with the S.W.A.T. Team one afternoon in 1986 because a fugitive cop-killer had taken a young boy hostage and barricaded himself in a house. Several attempts to coax or force the gunman out had failed, and Tranter got the assignment to enter and neutralize the suspect. Tranter opened fire with his shotgun, missed, entered the house, and an exchange of shots left Tranter wounded. Bleeding, he picked up the boy and ran out into the yard with him, while another officer, entering behind Ralph Tranter, killed the suspect.

In some cases, having plainclothes officers along on raids is unavoidable. A well-planned raid can employ the S.W.A.T. Team for the heavy work, but will require plainclothes investigators to sift through the premises in search of evidence. There can easily be technicians from the identification unit and crime lab working the scene after the premises have been "secured."

But are the premises always really secure? In one marijuana raid, the suspect wasn't even home. He arrived two hours after the raid began, and surrendered quietly. However, there was no guarantee of this, and the officers were prepared for anything. Some suspects find hiding places

that searching officers may at first overlook. Arresting officers found Charles Manson hiding in a cubbyhole.

The point's very clear. Even when the raid's critical phase is over, it's never really over until everybody's gone home. There's always the prospect of a still-hidden suspect hidden who finally panics and attempts an escape, perhaps injuring or killing an officer who gets in his way. A suspect may return unexpectedly if he's not there at the outset. Finally, as we have seen, a suspect confronted on a minor charge can turn very violent without warning.

Mistaken Identity

We regularly read of shootings and almost-shootings resulting from an officer's mistaking a plainclothes officer for a felon. It can happen on the street, where an off-duty or plainclothes officer intervenes in a robbery or mugging and holds the suspect at gunpoint. Officers from a passing patrol car can easily interpret this as a holdup in progress and take appropriate action for this type of incident.

It's difficult to design precautions that will totally prevent a mistaken identification and its consequences. In a small agency, every officer knows all of the others, and this is likely to prevent mistaken identity for members of that agency. However, what happens when a member of the state narcotics bureau, or a federal agent, is involved in an action within that jurisdiction? It's easy to imagine scenarios in which a plainclothes federal agent intervenes in an armed robbery and risks being misidentified by responding uniformed officers. Likewise, it sometimes happens that in raids involving several agencies, not all members will know the others well enough to prevent a mistaken shooting. This happened in Scottsdale, Arizona several years ago. A member of the state police shot a Scottsdale plainclothes officer, mistaking him for a suspect.

Preventing this type of mistake requires several definite steps. An obvious one is promoting error-free identification of police officers during raids. A detailed briefing before the raid is essential, not only to discuss the plan but to ensure that all participants know all of the others. Just as importantly, each member should know the location of all of the others during the raid. In turn, each member should make a strong effort to work according to the plan, to avoid being out of place and possibly mistaken for a suspect. Finally, all members should wear distinctive clothing. A "raid jacket" is a good improvisation for plainclothes officers. Lacking these, a distinctive cap, headband, or even an armband will do.

Other off-duty and plainclothes officers should keep their badges handy. Many wear their badges on their belts, normally covered by their jackets but easily uncovered by pulling back the flap.

In some agencies, officers have a characteristic phrase or expression to identify those out of uniform. In New York City, a plainclothes officer will say "I'm on the job" to identify himself to a uniformed officer.

There are still mistaken shootings despite this. One day, during the 1960s, a rear-end accident involving two off-duty officers in the Bronx, New York, resulted in a double shooting. A rookie officer, off-duty and in plain clothes, was asked by the other off-duty officer to identify himself. The rookie reached into his coat for his badge, but the second officer thought he was reaching for a weapon. He drew first and fired, killing him. A passing off-duty police lieutenant, seeing what appeared to be a civilian shooting a second civilian, opened fire and wounded the second officer.

Another basic step is to avoid, if possible, pursuing anyone while in plain clothes and with a weapon in your hand. There have been enough cases of the pursuer's being mistaken for the robber to make this hazardous. There are better choices, and we'll cover foot pursuit in the next section.

Felony in Progress

Plainclothes officers, like off-duty officers, can be on the scene as nonparticipants when a felony "comes down." You might be interviewing a robbery witness in a supermarket when another attempt by a robber lands at your feet. Convenience markets fall victim to stickups so often that they're known as "stop and robs" in some areas. Stopping at a convenience market to make a telephone call can make you a witness to a robbery. If the phone booth is outside the store, you may see the suspect fleeing, or witness an assault in the parking lot.

As a police officer, you may feel duty-bound to intervene. Don't rush in. The situation may turn more dangerous than you anticipate. If you're off-duty, did you bring both your weapon and your badge with you? Remember those mistaken shootings.

You need to make a quick estimate of the tactical situation. The decision to intervene is never as simple as it seems. If you're off duty, your family might be with you. On or off duty, you might be in a bad tactical situation, with the gunman watching your every move.

At the very least, make a mental note of the gunman's description. If circumstances make it impossible for you to take action, you'll be able to

Figure 40. If you have to call the office, don't turn your back on the parking lot and the doors. They don't call these "stop and robs" for nothing!

provide valuable information to responding officers. Your experienced eye may spot something other witnesses missed. Some robbers use "back-ups," who remain in the background but watch the scene for unexpected resistance, and who then fade into the crowd if they don't need to show themselves. You might also make a mental list of the types of weapons used by the robber or robbers.

If you decide to intervene, the big decisions are when and how. You can't simply flash your badge and yell "POLICE OFFICER." This can start a gunfight in a crowd, and even get you killed. You need to judge the situation carefully before acting. This is why it's important never to let your alertness lapse when you approach and enter a potential crime scene. A car with the engine running, or one or two characters lurking with no apparent reason, can be tip-offs that something unusual is about to happen. This is the time to start quietly moving towards cover. You don't need to crouch down behind cover with your weapon drawn. You do, however, need to be ready to act when the moment is right.

An important precaution is to take a portable radio with you, if the department issues them to plainclothes officers, whenever you leave

Figure 41. A better way. If the phone cord will allow, turn to observe the store and the entrance. As you speak, scan the parking lot. This will give you early warning of anything unusual.

your vehicle. This gives you instant communication, and you might need it very badly. However, don't carry it in your hand. This screams "COP" and will draw attention to you. Keep it in a pocket with the volume turned very low.

If there are many bystanders, the best course is to remain quiet and allow the robbery to proceed, not taking action until the gunman leaves. Taking the risk of the robber's making a successful escape is far preferable to precipitating a shoot-out that can take lives and provoke lawsuits.

If there are only you, the clerk, and the robber in the store, and the robber hasn't noticed you, the choice is yours. At all times you must consider the safety of the clerk. If you startle the gunman while an innocent person is in his line of fire, he may reflexively pull the trigger. The earliest moment to try for an arrest is after the robber has turned away from the clerk and is on his way out.

At times, you'll find it's best to try for an apprehension in the parking lot or street. If there are few or no people outside, it's clear for you. Before you start out, tell the clerk to call the police. If you have a

portable radio, use that, rather than trusting a clerk who might be frozen in fear.

Making your exit will be the hard part. A robber or his backup may be watching the exit, primed to shoot in case of pursuit. If there's a side or back door, use it. It helps you approach the scene from an unexpected direction, giving you some surprise, and you might make it to cover before they see you.

In every case, go for cover first, before whipping out the badge and gun. You don't want to bet your life that, when you yell "FREEZE," he'll cooperate and freeze. If he does, "prone him out" and wait for backup. Be sure that you remain behind cover, and watch your back. Have your ID ready to avoid a mistake when uniformed officers arrive. If you have a portable, make contact with responding officers to describe yourself and your location. Stay behind cover for protection from responding officers' possible errors. Don't trust in their evaluating the situation correctly within split-seconds.

If the robbers take off in a vehicle, you'll have a real problem. Departmental policy usually forbids shooting at a moving vehicle, because disabling the driver creates a missile that's out of control and dangerous to other traffic. Rarely is the urgency of an arrest so great as to outweigh the safety of innocent parties. Probably your best course is to try to pursue in your vehicle, and acquire additional units on the way.

If you have to use a pay phone at the roadside, or in a parking lot, don't become so engrossed in the conversation that you stop watching your surroundings. If a serious incident occurs, you want to know about it before it involves you. As you speak, let your eyes wander over the parking lot and the nearest building. Don't neglect the other side of the road, either, because something significant might be happening there.

Your car should be nearby. This provides an important base of operations if you need it. The car offers mobility, cover, communications, and additional weapons or ammo if you keep them in the car.

Foot pursuit is a special problem. As we have already noted, there have been cases of the wrong person getting shot by a responding officer. If you have to chase a felon, reholster your weapon before starting out. There are three important reasons for this. One is that departmental policy, as well as good safety practice, may demand that you never run with a gun in your hand. One slip, and you might have an accidental discharge. Another reason is that you can't, unless you're one of a tiny number of gifted experts, hit anything while running, anyway. If you

have to shoot, you stop and take cover, then draw and fire. The third reason is that another officer might take you for the felon and open fire.

At the end of the chase, try to obtain assistance in handling your prisoner or prisoners. Plainclothes units don't have prisoner "cages," and trying to drive while transporting dangerous felons is very risky. If you have a partner, it's less risky. An additional precaution to reduce the risk is to truss the suspects with nylon flexible cuffs. One way is to bind their ankles. Another is to use a nylon cuff to tie their handcuffs together to make attack or flight more difficult.

Juvenile Officers

Juvenile officers may, at times, be complacent. However, there have been enough recent cases of vicious and even homicidal behavior by minors to show that "juvies" can sometimes be dangerous.

An officer assigned to the "runaway detail" may feel that his subjects aren't dangerous, because running away is only a status offense. There are exceptions. Runaways leave home for a reason, and may feel very threatened by the prospect of going back. They can be "strung-out" emotionally, and this can lead to unexpected violence. Another prospect, although less common, is the juvenile who has found a "crash pad" run by an exploitative adult. The adult, who takes in runaways regularly, may exploit them for prostitution or dealing drugs. If you're the juvenile officer who encounters such a situation, be prepared to deal with a possibly violent juvenile and a criminal adult "protector," who may himself be a hardened recidivist.

Another extra hazard, when investigating juvenile offenses, may come from the juvenile's parents or guardians, who may adopt protective attitudes towards the young offender. If it's necessary to go to a juvenile's home to pursue an investigation, you ought to take precautions similar to those you would take if dealing with an adult, such as wearing body armor and calling for backup.

Experienced juvenile officers working with street gangs know that members can be very violent. This has been true for years, long before the film "Colors" popularized it for the public. In such locales, it's wise never to take anything for granted.

Undercover Officers

Working undercover can be especially ticklish because you probably won't be carrying a badge, and perhaps not even a handgun. Many under-

cover officers feel that there are many more threats to survival because of the greater number of risks. In working undercover, there are some points to watch that apply only to this special situation.

1. Cover. This is your basic technique, and you must keep it working to survive. Keeping a cover has its own problems, though, any of which can have fatal results.

A) Pick a cover you can maintain without faltering 24 hours a day. The basic requirement is that you must know your cover perfectly. If you pose as a plumber, you have to know the trade. Posing as a photographer is also a useful cover, but you must know both the technical and business aspects of photography.

It's difficult to overemphasize this point. On two occasions in Tucson, Arizona, undercover officers posing as miners were questioned in detail by suspects with mining experience.

B) Be prepared for encountering subjects of an investigation while with your family or friends. One officer who was approached while with his family in a public place handled it by saying to his wife: "Say 'Hi' to (his real name) when you see him." His wife would then take the children to the nearest restaurant to wait while he dealt with the contact.

C) You also have to watch for loss of identity. It's possible for an undercover officer to get carried away, and overidentify with his cover or his suspects. You and your partner have to monitor each other for this.

D) Be aware of the danger of being "burned" inadvertently by friends, acquaintances, and even other officers. Some like to demonstrate that they know a nark, and will greet you conspicuously in a public place. The way to limit this danger from fellow officers is a policy that, outside the office, only the undercover officer will show recognition or initiate a conversation.

E) The most likely way that you'll be burned is by the subjects of the investigation running a routine surveillance on you. Certain types of illegal operations, such a drug rings, have members who are paranoid about the possibility of infiltration. They'll check out everyone before taking them into their confidence. This is why you have to be conscious of a tail whenever you leave a meet, and you must be able to shake a tail without arousing suspicion. You can't do this too often, because nobody will believe it's just coincidence. You have to let your tail follow you home, which means that you need to set up a fake domicile away from your real home and family, and use that as a "home." If your agency

doesn't have the funds to support this, you're taking a chance if you're on a prolonged assignment.

2. **Attitude.** Undercover operatives are as vulnerable to attitude problems as are regular plainclothes officers. You must learn to recognize the danger signs.

A) If you become complacent, you may take shortcuts or run unnecessary risks. You may also fail to notice danger signs. The other side of the coin is that, if you're too cautious, you may endanger others by failing to act when necessary. Maintaining the delicate balance requires constant attention.

B) Knowing yourself is important, and admitting your abilities and limitations to yourself is equally vital. This safeguards against overconfidence.

C) It's equally important to recognize when it's time to get out of undercover work and back into "mainstream" assignments.

3. **Tactics.** A) It's important to develop a sense of timing. When working narcotics, for example, it's best to begin with small buys (one or two joints, or ¼ gram of cocaine) because the stress on both participants is lower. This allows rapport to build up gradually.

B) In any transaction, it's important to gain and retain control. Having control means choosing the times and places for meets, and persuading the subject to follow your judgment and lead because you have an air of competence and confidence. This provides a slight edge in survival.

Control helps when you can choose the time and place for a meet. An undercover officer always has to watch his back, and be wary of ambushes. If the subjects of the investigation become aware of his true identity and affiliation, they may not hesitate to kill him, and a meet can be a setup for an ambush.

C) Always be aware of the danger of a body search, especially when wearing a "wire." There may be a "bump frisk" for a weapon, which isn't too hard to explain if disclosed. Many suspects in the illegal drug trade are armed. A wire, however, is another and much more serious problem. Be prepared to use stratagems to avoid being searched. In one extreme case, the undercover officer said to the suspect; "You're nothing but a commoner, and I won't be touched by you." He then stalked out. This won't work with every suspect, though.

Some women do a "snuggle search" for a weapon or wire. This can be very dangerous, and you ought to be prepared to take serious steps to avoid being exposed. If necessary, tell the woman that you're gay, and

that you can't stand being touched by a female. This will blow a hole in your ego, but the alternative is worse.

When wearing a wire, it's vital to keep your outside backup informed as much as possible. Always be aware that the transmitter may be out of order, and be prepared to use a manual "move in" signal if necessary.

D) If the deal is outdoors and the weather permits, a heavy outer garment such as a leather motorcycle jacket can conceal body armor. Body armor made to resemble a garment is better though. Always bear in mind that heavy clothing, including body armor, may impede access to a weapon.

Off-Duty

Perhaps the major concern for the police officer is encountering the occasional suspect who has threatened his life, and the lives of his family. Probably every experienced officer has arrested at least one extremely dangerous type who utters the threat, and appears capable of carrying it out when he's released. This is why police officers keep their telephones unlisted, and why in California, it's a crime for the media to publish a police officer's address and telephone number.

This is a good reason for an off-duty police officer to carry a gun wherever he goes. An additional reason is for protection against the ordinary muggers and molesters who prey upon civilians. With a weapon, he's better prepared in case a gang of bikers come upon him and his family during a picnic.

Apart from these instances, the off-duty officer sometimes faces special risks. If he comes upon a crime in progress, the decision to intervene will usually be more complicated than if he were in uniform. He may be mistaken for a suspect. If he has his family with him, they may be exposed to danger. He may not be able to open fire because of danger to bystanders. Another possible problem is that the off-duty weapon may be unreliable. Here's what happened to one officer:

He drove into a hamburger "joint" with his family in the car with him. He saw a young officer holding six suspects at gunpoint in the parking lot. Leaving his family in the car, he identified himself as a police officer and asked the uniformed officer if he needed help. The officer replied "yes," and the off-duty officer drew a small .25ACP auto pistol from his pants pocket. This particular brand of weapon had a bad reputation for jamming, and as the officer worked the slide to insert a round into the chamber, the round flipped and "smokestacked." Keeping the pistol

down beside his leg, the off-duty officer managed to conceal the jam from the suspects. He ordered them to turn around, and once the suspects had turned, he cleared the jam. Fortunately, this incident did not become critical. However, if there had been a need to open fire immediately, the result would have been tragic.

Another incident occurred in midtown New York, when three off-duty officers encountered an armed robber on the sidewalk. The gunman was at that very moment running out of a bar onto the street, escaping from the scene of the stickup with his weapon still in his hand. The time was five o'clock in the afternoon, and the sidewalks were filled with people. Although all officers were armed, they could not fire, and had to pursue the gunman on foot, hoping that he would not turn around and shoot at them. Fortunately, there was construction work farther on, and the gunman ran around a corner and into a barrier. He tumbled down, dropping his gun in the fall, and the three officers overpowered him and held him for the responding patrol car crew.

Let's now look at the case of an officer who was permanently "off-duty" because he had retired. He had kept his service revolver after leaving the department, and taken it with him to another state where he and his family had relocated. One night his wife heard a noise, and he went out, weapon in hand, to investigate. He saw a shadow in the yard, and when he approached a teenager ran past him and down the street. The retired officer took a firing position, but realized that he should not fire, not even a "warning shot." Instead, he yelled after the fleeing suspect: "You little bastard, come back here and I'll blow your head off!"

This ex-officer reacted well under pressure. His assuming a firing position reflexively was a good precaution in case the suspect had turned on him with a deadly attack. He kept his head and held his fire, instead hurling a threat after the fleeing suspect. With a street cop's intuition, he knew that his action might well lead the suspect to believe that he had been lucky to get away with his life, and perhaps even deter him from returning.

Protecting Yourself

Personal protective measures include wearing body armor when you know that something "heavy" will be coming down. Neglecting this simple step isn't macho; it's stupid. Another is knowing all of the officers involved in a raid.

Unfortunately, this isn't enough. When you go on a raid, keep close to

cover and watch your back. Never assume anything. Assuming that all other officers are doing their jobs properly can lead to trouble. Expect the worst, and specifically be prepared for unexpected happenings such as:

- A suspect turning up in a room supposedly already "cleared."
- A prisoner drawing a weapon after he's been "searched."
- Additional suspects arriving unexpectedly.
- If a firefight develops, expect a few of your colleagues' bullets to come your way, by cross-fire, ricochet, or by mistaken identity.
- Nobody remembered to bring handcuffs.

You may also have to cope with someone unreliable in the raiding party. This may be the sort of person who shoots first and asks questions later, or who performs his or her duties so negligently as to put others in danger.

A sensitive and intelligent commander will keep such persons off the team when planning the raid. If he's forced to include someone inept because of personnel limitations, he can assign such a person to a task where the opportunity to do much harm is limited.

Special Situations, Special Risks

If you're in plainclothes or off-duty, you face fewer risks than patrol officers, but when a bad situation erupts, it can take you by surprise unless you're prepared. Even with the best of preparation, surprise is inevitable at times. Observing basic precautions, and being mentally ready for the worst, will probably pull you through.

Chapter Nine

MOONLIGHTING

Police officers who hold second jobs are fairly common. While some work outside their fields, many use their skills and special status as police officers to earn money outside regular channels. Some employers are willing to pay premium rates to obtain the services of a sworn and armed police officer.

Retail Security

Retail security is essentially a civilian occupation, but some retailers prefer to spend the extra money to have a sworn, armed police officer instead of a "rent-a-cop." Except in California, a sworn police officer has full police powers when working off-duty. All over the country, retail security can be dangerous.

On May 27, 1988, an off-duty police officer in Phoenix, Arizona was shot to death while moonlighting as a security guard. Kenneth J. Collings confronted two armed bank robbers, who shot him down during their escape.

If you're working store security in plainclothes, your employer will probably assign you to combat shoplifters. Most of the ones you'll spot and apprehend will be amateurs. Indeed, in Arizona, one member of the state police working retail security off-duty arrested a member of the state attorney general's office "boosting" some shirts.

Most amateurs will be so embarrassed that they'll offer no resistance, and the techniques of apprehension used by civilian store security officers are designed to minimize the anxiety of the confrontation and reduce the chances of violence. However, some "boosters" are professionals, and some of these can be very dangerous.

Probably the least predictable professionals are the "hypes," or drug addicts who steal to support their habits. They usually have sallow complexions and look generally unhealthy, but can turn violent very quickly.

Arrests such as these are the sort that really require a backup, but

when you're working retail security the employer considers you to be the backup, the one-man army. This can be flattering, but if you start to believe it yourself, you're becoming complacent.

Store policy will almost always require arrest only outside the premises, to establish beyond doubt intent to steal. What's open to question is exactly how far outside the premises you will arrest the suspect. If you believe the suspect may be armed, it's best to avoid arresting within the shopping mall or on a crowded sidewalk. The parking lot is a good choice, because there are usually fewer people close enough to be in danger. The cars also offer good cover in case you need them, although you have to generate the time to go for cover.

The "normal" arrest technique is to walk alongside the subject and identify yourself as a store security officer and request that he or she accompany you back to the store to "clear up a problem." This avoids the suddenness of the confrontation, and arouses less anxiety. The "pro" won't be taken in by this at all, and will realize that an arrest is imminent. He may turn on you, or draw a weapon, or run to his car and try to get away.

If you feel that the subject is armed, it's best to take no chances and avoid the close confrontation which can needlessly expose you to danger. Instead, call for him or her to stop from behind a car. This provides the opportunity to duck for cover if the person turns with a weapon.

Bodyguard

A police officer may have to function as a bodyguard, either because of a departmental assignment to dignitary protection or while moonlighting. If you ever undertake such duties, you will find that you have to change your way of thinking and reacting to situations because the priorities of the task are so greatly different. The main priority is preventing an attack, not coping with it after it comes. In so doing, you have to make your charge's safety your first concern, and not become distracted.

Executive protection requires brains more than brawn. Technique, rather than physical strength, is more important. The stereotype of the hulking goon as bodyguard is obsolete. The modern bodyguard has to know his trade, and success requires more than average intelligence.

The Bodyguard's Role. Let's begin by laying out exactly what a bodyguard is and does. His primary responsibility is protection of the dignitary from assault or kidnapping. If you're assigned to uniformed duty during the visit of a public figure, you're not really a bodyguard. It

would be more accurate to call your function "crowd control." You're working the outer perimeter to maintain order and to enforce the law much as you would in other situations.

The bodyguard is the plainclothes officer who stays close to the protectee, moving with him everywhere he goes. If this is your role, your primary task is the protection of the dignitary, not crowd control or general law enforcement. While this may seem simple and obvious, carrying out your task will require that you reorient your thinking. Some police officers are never successful at making this change, and can't be effective bodyguards because they revert to their law enforcement roles during a crisis. One excellent example was the reaction of the bodyguards during the assassination of Malcolm X in 1965. Malcolm X was on a stage, speaking to the audience, when a disturbance broke out to one side. His bodyguards moved off to cope with the disturbance and restore order. This left Malcolm X exposed, and seconds later he was shot to death.

The bodyguard's role is to remain close to the protectee, whatever else happens. The bodyguard's obligation is the safety of this charge, even if it means fleeing in the face of danger. What would seem to be cowardice or neglect of duty in other contexts is actually the wisest move when you're a bodyguard.

Defense In Depth

If you're assigned to dignitary protection during a public appearance, you'll be part of a screen around the protectee. The President of the United States and foreign dignitaries receive the most elaborate protection. There's an outer perimeter, with uniformed officers scanning the crowds and surrounding areas for possible threats. An inner perimeter handles the crowds closest to the dignitary. Close protection officers remain at the dignitary's side, or close behind him, to cope with any threats that penetrate the other screens.

It's important to understand why we use the word "screen." We can't put up a wall around the protectee. There's no ironclad protection. History shows that even the U.S. Secret Service cannot protect the President 100 percent all of the time. One hundred percent protection would be possible only if the dignitary were willing to spend 24 hours a day in a bunker. Because he has to be mobile, and to contact the public, the best we can do is provide one or more layers of screens to protect him.

If you're protecting a local dignitary, or a private individual while moonlighting, you won't have the luxury of several screens of protection.

You may be part of a very small team, or be working alone. This isn't ideal protection, but most often the budget won't allow more elaborate measures. You'll be forced to rely on secrecy and mobility to avoid threats.

Secrecy and the Low Profile

A major part of dignitary protection is keeping the protectee's location and movements secret, limiting information to those who "need to know." This denies vital knowledge to anyone planning an attack or ambush.

Tied in with this is what's known in the trade as "keeping a low profile." Avoid being conspicuous, such as dressing opulently. "Power suits" make both you and your protectee stand out in a crowd. Gucci shoes, and a Vuitton or Mark Cross attache case are similar trappings of power and wealth, and can mark you for special attention. Keeping an unlisted telephone number and using a post office box as a mailing address make locating the protectee more difficult. Another valuable step is to follow an erratic schedule as much as possible, to make the protectee's movements unpredictable. If the protectee is a public figure, it's important to avoid publicizing his movements unless absolutely necessary.

Although the protectee's schedule must follow certain patterns, it's possible to increase security by varying both the routes and schedules. This is why, if you're in charge of planning the protection, you must explore alternate routes for your charge's travels.

It's also necessary to convince your protectee of the need to vary his schedule from day to day. The Italian statesman, Aldo Moro, left himself open to kidnaping by attending church at the same time each day. Your client should be willing to vary both the place and time he takes lunch each day, his recreational activities, and any other duties that may bring him to a certain place at a regular time.

Mobility

Because escape from danger is so important, you'll want to be sure that every locale has one or more escape routes. Indoors, you need to know the location of every elevator, stair, fire escape, and emergency exit. Knowing each one also helps forestall access to your client through one of these. It also helps to know every route you and your client will have to take, and the locations of hospitals and police stations nearby.

When traveling, it's important to know the route, and to preplan,

using other avenues. Choosing a route for driving is important to avoid ambushes. A narrow lane with no exits and lots of cover and concealment alongside the road is a perfect set-up for an ambush, and avoiding these is half the job. A main road with lots of traffic and many turn-offs provides a variety of choices if a threat develops.

Personal Protective Measures

It should be obvious that both you and your client need to wear body armor. If the budget allows, the automobile should also be armored. If not, the car should be of a common make, not a conspicuously opulent one. A limousine, or racy and expensive sports sedan, spoils the low profile because it stands out from other traffic.

Keeping the car under guard or locked in a secure area when not in use is an important precaution against sabotage. You, or the chauffeur, should inspect the car after it has been left unattended, as an additional safeguard. Ideally, the bodyguard and the chauffeur are two different people, but your client may not be able to afford both. In either case, the person driving the car should have taken a course in evasive driving, such as the one provided by the "Scotti School of Defensive Driving." This is geared towards enabling the driver to recognize the warning signs of ambushes and to drive out of them if the situation allows it.

As a sworn police officer, you have the advantage of being authorized to carry concealed weapons. Don't take this for granted if your client travels a lot. In another state, local police may not honor your credentials. In a foreign country, you're just another tourist, and police will take offense at your assuming any special privileges. Keep in mind that the international brotherhood of police officers may not be enough to save you from criminal prosecution in countries with strict firearms laws.

Responding to an Attack

If the attack comes, your responsibility is evacuation, not apprehension. If you're the close protection officer during a public appearance, leave the apprehension to officers working the outer perimeter. Get your protectee shielded and out of the danger area immediately. You should place yourself between the protectee and the threat. This is an important reason for wearing body armor.

If you're working in a two-officer team, there should be a clear understanding of duties before an attack begins. This is essential because there's no time to decide this after the start of an attack. Reaction should

be quick and reflexive. One officer should always be responsible for getting the client to safety, while the other seeks to delay or disable the attacker.

If the attacker is very close, you may not be able to evacuate your client quickly enough. Often, the quickest way to deal with an attacker is to block or disarm him. At close quarters, it's quicker to deflect or disarm than to draw a weapon from under clothing. If the attack takes place in a crowd, shooting can endanger bystanders.

If it becomes necessary to return fire, you may find that you can't do it the usual way from behind cover. If your client's exposed, you have to be his cover while the danger lasts, and you do this by firing from the standing position. If there are two or more of you, one officer shields the client while the other(s) return fire.

It may be necessary to take the protectee to the floor to shield him. You can do this by a trip, or knocking his knees out from under him. This is only worth doing if absolutely essential, because the safest course is to get the protectee away as soon as possible.

Special Training

Most police agencies don't provide any protective training to their officers. The few that have special responsibilities, such as protecting the mayor or governor, sometimes send their officers to private academies that specialize in this sort of curriculum. Two resources for executive protection training are:

Kobetz & Associates
North Mountain Pines Training Center
Arcadia Manor
Rt. Two, Box 100
Berryville, VA 22611
att: Richard Kobetz, Director

Note: Kobetz & Associates have a splendid reputation among the professionals.

Scotti School of Defensive Driving
10 High Street
Medford, MA 02155
Telephone: (800) 343-0046

Note: This school is more than its name implies. Anthony Scotti, its President, teaches evasive driving, but the school also has full-bore courses in executive protection. These courses employ a varied staff, including a former Secret Service Agent and a private bodyguard. Scotti regularly schedules seminars in various parts of the country, including two-day seminars and five-day "hands-on" courses.

Chapter Ten

POLICIES

Up to several years ago, few police agencies in this country had set policies regarding plainclothes officers' weapons. Similarly, off-duty guns were often neglected. This has been changing rapidly, because of a growing recognition that plainclothes and off-duty officers can also become involved in shoot-outs. An excellent example occurred in Dallas, Texas, on January 23rd, 1988. A uniformed officer writing a traffic citation was approached by another person, disarmed, and shot to death. Off-duty police officers engaged the attacker and killed him.

There has also been increased consciousness of departmental liability.

An important step for the police administrator is to establish a set of written policies for plainclothes officer survival. Setting up clear policies serves three purposes:

1. It's the first step in avoiding liability.
2. It provides written guidelines for behavior.
3. It tells plainclothes officers that the department cares about their safety, and will instruct them in safe practices and tactics.

Policies must conform to reality. One of the greatest weaknesses in a para-military organization such as the police is that the wrong rules often get the most attention and the most rigorous enforcement. The crushing paperwork load dominates an officer's time, and failure to keep up with required paperwork results in disciplinary action.

For plainclothes, as well as uniformed, officer survival, there are several very important policies to enforce strictly:

1. Plainclothes officers should carry only department-issued or department-approved weapons and ammunition. The departmental armorer should inspect all weapons periodically to ensure that they're serviceable and safe.

2. Qualification with weapons. This must be with the weapon the officer actually carries. For qualification he must also carry it in the manner he carries it "on the street." Qualification must be periodic, with the minimal intervals being every four months, with more frequent

training preferable. Those who fail to qualify must go through a period of remedial training before being allowed to carry a weapon again. This makes retraining urgent, because it should be against policy for any unarmed investigator to go out into the field. He may be assigned desk work until the next remedial training class, but the best solution is to schedule corrective training for the next workday.

3. Weapons must be carried when out in the field, no matter what the assignment. Detectives have been caught short enough times to make this mandatory. Don't tell yourself "This is just a juvie call." You might walk into something more serious on the way.

4. Weapons must always be secured. No weapons or ammunition should ever be left in an unlocked drawer or in a briefcase. Any room containing weapons or ammunition should always be locked when unoccupied.

5. If possible, prisoner booking and handling should be separate from the detectives' offices. This will minimize suspects' access to weapons. All who handle suspects should first lock their personal weapons away.

6. Body armor should be available for officers to wear whenever they leave the building. This may seem useless on certain assignments, but a police officer can encounter a felony in progress by accident, even while on a "safe" assignment. While it's not practical to mandate that officers will wear body armor on every assignment, it should be there for those who prefer to be safe than sorry.

7. Officers should never undertake arrests alone, except in an emergency. Arrests for misdemeanors and nonviolent crimes require at least two officers. If the subject has a history of violence, if the arrest is for a violent crime, or if there's reason to believe that the subject may resist, departmental policy should state the minimum number of officers required for the arrest. This can be difficult in small departments because adequate forces aren't always available.

If sufficient manpower is not available within the department, the officer in charge should consider calling a neighboring department for help or backup. Typically, the county sheriff's office or the state police can help.

8. There must be close collaboration between plainclothes and patrol bureaus. In many cases, a sector car or other patrol unit can accompany arresting officers. In high-risk arrests, two or more members of the S.W.A.T. Team may accompany officers serving the warrant, if manpower is available.

9. Transporting a dangerous arrestee requires special precautions. A

prisoner van is desirable. Calling a marked unit with a "cage" is an expedient.

10. Any off-duty weapon must be first checked out and approved by the departmental armorer, and the officer must qualify with it as often as he qualifies with his service weapon. When carrying an off-duty weapon, the officer must carry it concealed and with at least one full reload for the weapon. This means at least six extra rounds for revolvers, and one spare magazine for autos.

Drawing up policies is only the first step. Implementation is the next, and equally important one. All officers transferring into plainclothes work should receive a copy of the written policies, and sign a receipt to document having gotten it. The officer should have a reasonable time to study the policies, such as two days. At the end of this time, the superior officer should interview the new officer and ask him if he has any questions. In turn, the superior should question the officer regarding any anticipated difficulties in carrying out the policies.

This sort of close supervision will help uncover problems such as the officer's not having the right size of body armor, or having trouble with his holster. Close questioning also shows up intangible problems, such as the officer's not understanding exactly when he's required to call for uniformed backup. It helps, both in everyday life and in court, for a supervisor to be able to document that he did his best in teaching his officers what departmental policies require and in supervising his officers to ensure that they followed them.

Chapter Eleven

TRAINING

Situations that detectives encounter are different from those faced by uniformed officers. This is why plainclothes survival training has to fit the special circumstances that plainclothes officers face. The person assigned to plainclothes duty has probably had some form of officer survival training at the academy, and perhaps additional in-service sessions and seminars, but plainclothes duty requires a different orientation.

The training format will depend on the department and its size. Large agencies, such as the New York City Police Department, can hold periodic "detective schools" for the instruction of newly promoted officers. Smaller agencies rely on less formal arrangements, such as special short courses for a few officers. Whatever the format, the subjects necessary remain the same. They comprise both classroom and hands-on range work.

Classroom

Mental Preparedness. Overcoming the "never happen to me" attitude is the first step. It's not enough to have an academic understanding that danger and death are possible. Many people, not only police officers, know that they're taking useless risks with certain forms of behavior, but they don't act as if they know. People who smoke, drive drunk, and who don't wear seat belts are three excellent examples of people who don't act as if they understand the danger. The aspiring plainclothes officer must understand that it can happen to him. Citing disastrous cases can prove the point.

Learning and using mental rehearsals is the next step. A dangerous incident "can happen to me," and mental rehearsals can help officers to cope when it does. Mentally planning how to meet certain hostile situations is basic preparation for action. Some officers refer to this as the "what if" game.

The main advantage of mental rehearsal is that the individual officer can use cases from his own memory. He can recall instances in which he

made bad tactical moves, and "play back" each incident step by step to work out a better solution. He can also use cases that involved other officers.

Try this for yourself. Mentally go through an incident that involved another officer, one which was both dangerous and badly managed. While there's a strong feeling against "Monday morning quarterbacking," you can use this technique constructively in the privacy of your own mind. Nobody's feelings will be hurt, and you won't make any enemies by mentally replaying other officers' mistakes. If you can be objective enough to analyze your own errors, you may be able to work the same process with some of your street experiences and "close calls."

Classroom Firearms Orientation. There have been many myths about firearms and gunfighting tactics spread through ignorance and for sensationalism by the media. Certain favorite, but almost meaningless, phrases such as "stopping power" have been the focal points of many controversies and have led to the waste of tons of paper and printing ink.

Unfortunately, many police firearms instructors read the same materials and are as easily misled. The officers they teach pick up the same misconceptions.

The examples cited earlier in this book show plainly that we can't generalize about caliber and weapon effectiveness. Large-caliber weapons of "proven effectiveness" have failed to stop suspects in certain incidents, such as the Miami FBI shoot-out where the main suspect, Platt, had 12 bullet wounds. By contrast, in two cases we've mentioned, the suspects, armed with small-caliber auto pistols, out-shot the officers opposing them. Many people have been killed with small-caliber weapons, perhaps because their killers hadn't read that their calibers had insufficient "stopping power."

The New York City Police Department report, SOP-9, studied 6,000 shootings that occurred in New York. The conclusion was that bullet placement was the most important single factor in the results. Caliber, type of handgun, and other factors were less important. The point is clear: It's not what you've got, but what you do with it that counts.

These are good reasons for holding a firearms reorientation session with plainclothes officers. It serves to lay out newly-discovered facts about guns and gunfighting, and to draw new interpretations based on the facts. This is especially important because plainclothes officers, as we have seen, usually carry cut-down or light-weight sidearms. This is a good opportunity to stress that detectives and off-duty officers frequently

handicap themselves in ways far more severe that the difference between a two-inch and a four-inch pistol barrel. Carrying the weapon in a barely-accessible position is a serious error. This is worth bringing out to show that survival is more than just carrying a bigger gun.

Points to stress during the session are that tactics outrank ballistics in determining the outcome of a gunfight, and that a lack of awareness contributes to tactical failure in a shoot-out. However, preaching isn't enough. There should be blackboard diagrams of tactics, and classroom role-playing to show how plainclothes officers can secure and retain tactical advantages in encounters with their subjects.

Another myth to discuss is that of the "flashlight shooting stance." Although this has become fashionable in some circles, it has its dangers. The theory is that with a flashlight in one hand, you dazzle the adversary with the beam while using it as an aiming aid. The problem is that to light up your target, your first have to know where to point the beam. While you're searching, you're making a target of yourself. This is why the SOP-9 report pointed out that, although officers had used flashlights for searching buildings, none had used one as an aiming aid.

A workable alternative is using tritium sights. These are self-illuminating sights powered by a tiny amount of radioactive tritium. As many plainclothes investigators don't carry flashlights, there's an obvious advantage to a self-contained system. The dim glow from the sights is visible only to the shooter, and cannot be seen from the front. This passive system doesn't disclose the officer's position. The three-dot sight picture is one that many people find easy to use.

There are several sources for tritium night sights. The first two provide them for a variety of weapons. The sights sold by Hesco are designed for user installation. SIGARMS has the "Beta-Light" for their own handguns. Some of these go on easily without additional machining required on the weapon. Prices at time of writing varied with the company and ranged from about seventy up to over one hundred dollars per set.

Armson, Inc.
P.O. Box 2130
Farmington Hills, MI 48833
Phone: (313) 553-4960
att: Mr. Glyn Bindon, Pres.

Figure 42. This is what you see when sighting in dim light with tritium sights. If you can see your target, you can hit it. As for identifying your target positively before firing, call out, and ask the person to identify himself. Remain behind cover until you're sure.

Hesco
2821 Greenville Road
La Grange, GA 30240
Phone: (404) 884-4057
Att: Will Senn, Sales Mgr.

Sigarms, Inc.
470 Spring Park Place
Unit 900
Herndon, VA 22070
Phone: (703) 481-6660
att: Rich Turner

Tactical Training (Problems). These may be "canned" problems, as displayed in training tapes, or they may be reenactments of actual incidents. The value of reenactments is that the class understands that these are real incidents. If they're of local origin, students know that they happened to people in their agency, and may even have known some of the participants.

Here are several hypothetical problems. You can use these scenarios in the classroom or go out in the field to find a house to serve as "terrain." In using these, remember that often there's no "best" solution to the problem. A course of action often requires compromises, and what looks good in the classroom or on paper may not work as well out in the field.

1. You and your partner have an arrest warrant for a burglar, who lives in a furnished room. Study of his file before going out showed that the suspect had no history of violence, and that he's unmarried.

Do you remember to don body armor before leaving the office?

Do you and your partner drive by once or twice before stopping, to observe the locale?

Do you and your partner formulate a plan before approaching the front door?

Will both of you stand at the front door, or will one of you speak with the landlady while the other waits a few feet away in case someone else answers the door?

Do you plan to ask the landlady outside to explain the situation to her and obtain her cooperation, or will you simply ask her to tell the suspect that you've arrived to arrest him?

Do you intend to ask the landlady to tell you what she can about the suspect, such as whether he's alone or not, whether she has seen any weapons, etc.?

Have you considered how to get the landlady and any other occupants out of the line of fire if a gunfight erupts? When do you do this?

2. You're assigned a similar arrest on a day that your partner's called in sick.

How will this change your plans?

Will you ask your supervisor for another partner?

Will you ask that a uniformed officer back you up for the arrest?

Would you be as willing to enter the building without a partner or backup present?

3. You and your partner are assigned a high-risk arrest, a suspect wanted for armed robbery who also has a history of assaulting police officers. Your supervisor tells you that, because the suspect is evidently dangerous, you can have support from the department's S.W.A.T. Team.

Where will you rendezvous with members of the S.W.A.T. Team, in the office or at the suspect's home?

Do you know all members of the S.W.A.T. Team by sight? Do they know you and your partner?

Discuss the points regarding the issue of raid jackets to all involved.

Discuss the pros and cons of checking out extra weapons for yourself and your partner. Shotguns? Tear gas?

How do you plan to approach his residence?

How do you plan to clear innocent persons from the scene?

Have you considered ways to lure him outside before attempting an arrest?

How will you develop information about the suspect, covering whether he's alone or with accomplices or possible hostages, weapons, etc.?

4. You and your partner are going out to interview someone who might be a suspect in a major crime. This person has no history of violence, but you're still somewhat apprehensive.

Because this person's not under arrest, you can't search and handcuff him, but what other precautions can you take to protect yourselves?

Will you choose to interview him within his premises, or invite him to accompany you to your office?

If he refuses to go with you, will you try to persuade him to come out to your car?

If you're forced to enter his quarters, how will you safeguard against a surprise assault?

Discuss how you'll position yourselves to keep the subject at a disadvantage while interrogating him.

5. You're off-duty, and making a stop at a convenience market to pick up a quart of milk. While you're inside, an armed robber enters and announces that he's taking the money, and that anyone who interferes will be shot.

Would you intervene at this point?
If you answer "yes," why?
What about the safety of bystanders in the store?
Would you prefer to wait until the robber's just left? Why?
Can you suggest any tactics that would help you if this happens to you?

Tactical Training (Actual Cases). More meaningful for advanced training is a collection of actual incidents.

There should be no shortage of real-life cases. They don't have to be instances of officers' being injured or killed. Any instance of warrant service upon a felony suspect can be a starter for a discussion and a reenactment. Sometimes, in real life, officers make tactical errors which the offender fails to exploit. In these instances, the officers survive by luck, and these cases make good studies for correcting errors.

Judgment (Shoot/Don't Shoot). These can be classroom studies, using films or videotaped presentations. Because the focus is on judgment, not marksmanship, such programs work with blank cartridges or empty weapons. Furthermore, the only way in which these would work with live fire without destroying the TV set would be with a projection TV throwing the image onto a paper screen which the rangemaster can change when it becomes too perforated. For indoor use, plastic, rubber, or wax bullets will serve without endangering the students.

Several commercial sources produce such tapes, which show a felony in progress or other dangerous situation and require a "shoot/don't shoot" decision from the viewer. The problem with these tapes is that most of them are oriented towards the patrol officer, not the detective. They show traffic stops, felony stops, response to "robbery in progress" calls, etc. They don't show situations that confront plainclothes officers. We don't see how to handle a subject who, during an interview at his home, slips a weapon from under the seat cushion. There are no reenactments of the civil warrant service that turns violent.

With the increasing numbers of small and medium-sized police agencies developing facilities for in-house videotape production, it's possible for departments to produce their own training tapes, tailored to individual needs. Also, as the need for plainclothes survival training becomes better known, commercial producers may offer such tapes.

Range Training

Basic Course. If the sidearm for plainclothes carry is different from the uniformed duty weapon, the officer should pass a familiarization course

with it. If the weapon is merely a short-barreled version of the duty sidearm, the department may waive a full-scale familiarization, at the discretion of the rangemaster or firearms instructor. The rangemaster should satisfy himself that the officer can handle the weapon adequately before he lets him "hit the street," because some find the short barrel a problem, or use it as an excuse for poor marksmanship.

At normal gunfighting ranges, seven yards or less, the short barrel and sight radius should have little effect upon shooting performance. If the plainclothes weapon is a much lighter version of the standard sidearm, such as a five-shot revolver instead of a big magnum, the difference in heft and grip will throw some shooters off. If this is the case, firing at least 200 rounds at ranges of seven yards and closer will be necessary. This remedial firing should be under the close supervision of the rangemaster.

Contrary to what many instructors teach today, the one-hand firing grip is the most useful for police use. This should be the basic grip and stance taught. The "Weaver" and other two-handed grips can be liabilities, especially for plainclothes officers. The reasons are few, but compelling:

1. Most engagements are close-up, within a few feet or across a room. Thrusting the weapon out in a two-handed grip places it within reach of a dangerous opponent. Keeping it close for a hip shot, with the spare hand out to deflect a weapon or blow, is more secure.

2. At close ranges, you should be able to direct your shots by "feel" alone, without using the sights.

3. With an attacker very close, you just don't have the time to draw, bring the weapon up to line of sight, and raise the other hand to meet it. While you're shuffling your feet to get into the "Weaver," or other two-handed stance, the assailant can pull the trigger of his weapon or slip a blade into you.

4. Making the one-hand grip reflexive prepares you for the close and deadly encounters. If your adversary is far enough away that you can't hit by pointing, you have time to raise the weapon, assume a two-handed grip, and use the sights.

A point that some instructors neglect is that personal factors are very important in pistol marksmanship. Because a police agency specifies a type or caliber of weapon, many instructors close their eyes to the prospect of improving shooter performance by having another type of weapon. In some cases, it's simply a matter of hand-fit.

Directed fire, without using the sights, depends very heavily on kines-

Figure 43. Grasp a pen or pencil in your fist and extend your index finger. This shows the angle the stock should have with the barrel to fit your fist best. This hand belongs to a person who feels most comfortable with a handgun such as the Luger, with a rakish stock angle.

thetic sense. For this to work, the weapon must fit the hand. Peoples' hands are not alike, just as people differ in other anatomical details. The handgun's grips may be too large or too small, and the stock angle may be wrong. This is a crucial point that most overlook.

Try this for yourself. Extend your index finger and point at something. Now turn your head and look at something else. Close your eyes, and bring your hand around so that your finger points at it. Open your eyes. You'll find that you're pretty close, if not pointed exactly at where you were looking. This shows kinesthetic sense, also known as "muscle memory." This is also the key to hitting a target without using the sights. The weapon must fit your hand so that the barrel is parallel to your extended index finger.

Now try this exercise with several different handguns. Check them first to make sure they're empty, of course, as you don't want to blow a hole in the wall. Holding the weapon at your side, look at a small object, such as a light switch, across the room. Close your eyes and lift the weapon until you feel that it's pointed at the target. Open your eyes. You'll find that some weapons "point" better than others, in your hand. Run someone else through this exercise, and you'll probably find a different weapon that "points" best.

This is a good case for an agency to authorize several weapons for duty,

including both revolvers and automatics. Each officer will have to find the weapon that fits him best, and the only way to do this is to try several for fit. The firearms instructor should have at least one of each type on hand for this. In a larger department, weapons confiscated "on the street" can, with cooperation from the courts, serve as test weapons when their evidentiary value is over. If the agency issues weapons, it's simply a matter of finding the type with which the officer performs best and signing one out to him or her. If the officers buy their own, as is more common, they should have the opportunity to try them out before committing their hard-earned money.

Is there any situation in which a less powerful caliber is allowable? This important point has been in the background because of the prominence of two attention-grabbing issues: "stopping power" and the "women's rights movement." Proponents of various stopping power theories claim that you need a certain minimal caliber to be effective against an opponent. Devotees of the women's rights movement are out to prove that women are every bit as good as men, and this includes handling of firearms.

The New York City Police Department, as well as other agencies, in years past used to equip their "policewomen" or "police matrons" with .32 caliber revolvers on the assumption that females would be unable to handle the larger .38 Specials. This has proved to be largely untrue, and female officers today carry the same handguns as their male counterparts. Equally true is the fact that some officers, both male and female, don't do well with the standard calibers.

It's not really a sexist issue. Some people are unusually recoil-sensitive and can't score with medium or large caliber weapons. This forces the firearms instructor or police administrator to make one of three choices:

1. Dismiss the officer as unsuited for the demands of the job.
2. Allow the officer to use a smaller weapon.
3. Fudge the training and/or qualification somehow. The instructor may choose to falsify the scores attained. He also may use a more dangerous method, an example of which we'll describe in the section on qualification.

It's obvious that the easy way out, choice #3, is the least desirable. It can lead to serious legal consequences for several obvious reasons. It can also get someone killed.

Choice #2 is possible but the police administrator has to face the slight prospect of a lawsuit based on permitting an officer to carry and use an inadequate weapon. Whether a lower caliber is "inadequate" or not is

unimportant. What counts is what an attorney can demonstrate in court.

Choice #1 is biting the bullet, but it's the safest course. It's an undesirable one for a police administrator worried about "equal opportunity" and quotas, but it avoids potential problems down the road.

We sometimes hear the objection that if an agency allows different calibers, there will be a problem with ammunition interchangeability, and this can be a problem if an officer can't pass some of his ammunition to another in a gunfight. The best answer to this is to study the gunfights that have taken place in your agency. How often has it been necessary for officers to replenish another's supply? Probably rarely, if at all. Gunfights are usually over very quickly, and officers carry enough rounds with them to meet almost all needs. This has been true for decades, and is even more true today because of the growing acceptance of high-capacity automatics. An officer equipped with a Glock 17 and two spare magazines, for example, carries over a box of ammunition (51 rounds) loaded and ready to go.

Equally important is confidence. Some officers prefer one type of handgun over another, or one caliber over another. For psychological reasons, including confidence in the weapon, it's important to try to let the officer have what he or she likes, within limits. This is why many departments allow an officer his choice of plainclothes or off-duty weapon, with the proviso that the armorer check out the weapon and ensure that it's working.

Whatever the weapon, skill is more important. Let's make the point, while discussing skill, that basic training isn't enough. The usual qualification course isn't enough. Both of these tend to be static courses, with officers firing at fixed paper targets from measured distances. In real life, suspects don't allow officers time to measure the range with a tape measure before opening fire. They also don't stand still while the officer draws, fires, and reloads to fire another string, PPC style, and this is why such training is unrealistic.

As a start, all firing after basic training should be stress firing. Each shooter should sprint at least one hundred yards to get his blood pressure and pulse rate up before drawing and firing. This procedure also serves as a quick diagnostic test. Anyone who can't sprint a hundred yards without collapsing is poor risk to confront a dangerous suspect.

Another way to produce stress is to use mild jolts from a stun gun in the buttocks while the officer is firing. Many will find this objectionable because about ten percent of people, including police officers, are deathly

afraid of electricity. This is why it's impossible to make this mandatory. However, for those who can tolerate them, mild shocks from a stun gun provide excellent training in learning to fire accurately despite severe stress.

Yet another way to simulate the realism of the street is to push the officer with short, sharp jabs while he's firing. Another technique is to grab one of his arms and yank it while he's firing. It's important to use both of these methods from the rear, for safety. This simulates a couple of the worst things that can happen to an officer; a gunfight in a crowd, with people frantically trying to escape, and having the suspect's friend or accomplice attacking the officer to prevent him from shooting.

Firing on an unobstructed range is unrealistic. For advanced training, a range with several obstructions to serve both as cover and as obstacles is better. In an indoor range, a "fun house," after the description given by Fairbairn and Sykes, is excellent. Second-hand furniture is perfect for this. Rural police agencies should have no trouble improvising an indoor range, finding an abandoned house in a remote area. With the owner's permission, installing old furniture and setting up targets will quickly convert an old house into a realistic indoor range. However, the range officer should not allow live ammunition if there's any risk of hitting people or occupied structures.

Advanced training also requires tactical firing, and emphasizing that the officer should not empty his weapon at a single target. A reloading drill should be a part of each firing session, with the officer required to reload when empty or nearly empty. The important point to watch here is to reload behind cover whenever possible. In every case, the officer should reload before reholstering.

Reloading, of course, must be with the same system the officer carries on the street. Using speedloaders for the range and carrying a dump pouch for the street is a no-no, because the officer should train and qualify with the same equipment he'll use on the street.

It's vital not to neglect low-light firing. Unfortunately, although police officers and firearms instructors acknowledge that most police-felon shoot-outs take place in dim light, most training and qualification still take place in bright daylight. As we saw in the description of the bar-room shoot-out, the suspect who had had time to accommodate his eyes to the dimmer light had an advantage over the officers who had just come in from bright sunlight.

A "night shoot" is an important part of both training and qualification.

It's not necessary to have the range pitch-black, as there's some ambient light in most real-life shoot-outs. Dawn or dusk are convenient times to stage low-light shoots, and if an indoor range is available, the instructor can adjust the lighting at any time.

Firing isn't the only requirement. The firearms instructor should check that the officer has his concealed holster adjusted correctly, and that he has all of the accessories and features in order. If the rig is a shoulder harness with a handcuff case or loop on the off-side, this should be in place and with handcuffs in it to offset the weapon's weight. The instructor should inspect the reloads the officer carries, and ensure that they are quickly accessible.

Weapon Retention. This is a lower-priority requirement for plainclothes and off-duty officers because they carry the weapon concealed. Still, there may be a danger of a suspect trying to "snatch" a drawn weapon, and some training in this aspect should be a part of the course.

There are several excellent systems of weapon retention, and all center around three tactics:

1. Keep the weapon out of the suspect's reach. This should be obvious, from the discussion of the weaknesses of the two-handed grips, above. When holding a suspect at gunpoint close-up, keeping the handgun at the hip, with the body turned slightly away from the suspect, makes it more difficult for him to reach the weapon.

2. Maintain control. This means clamping the other hand on the weapon if the suspect grabs for it. You use a two-handed grip to develop the force to twist the handgun out of his grasp. If your weapon is still in its holster, you can clamp it inside the holster with one hand.

3. Strike a counterblow to the face or chest with the free hand or elbow. There's no need to be gentle, as you're struggling for control of a deadly weapon, and if you lose it, both you and your partner will be in peril.

An important point to stress is to **always** practice weapon retention and disarms with dummy or empty weapons. Make sure by passing the weapon over to your training partner for him to check before starting practice.

Qualification. Qualification courses are similar to those for uniformed officers in that the plainclothes officer must qualify with the weapon he carries. Qualification must, in all instances, be completed before carrying the weapon on duty.

One important point is that the officer must qualify while drawing

from the carry position he uses on duty. While uniformed officers carry exposed holsters, detectives usually carry their sidearms under the jacket or in an ankle holster. The method of carry is usually left to the individual officer. The strict rule should be that, whatever the method chosen, the officer must qualify from that "carry."

A similarity between qualifications for both uniformed and plainclothes officers is that range-masters sometimes allow them to qualify by drawing from unsnapped holsters. Range-masters must eliminate this dangerous practice. An officer accustomed to drawing from an unsnapped holster will find himself severely handicapped if ever he has to draw for real with the strap snapped.

Another dangerous practice is the one allowed by a range officer when "qualifying" a female officer who had trouble holding her revolver while squeezing double-action. He backed off the strain screw, making the trigger pull lighter. There was still enough energy in the hammer impact to fire the cartridge. She qualified, and the range officer tightened the strain screw after the session was over. If ever she has to use her weapon on the street, she will have problems.

One reason that such cheating is allowed is that many officers take pride in their qualification scores. There's often a formal or informal competition for the best scores. When yearning for points overtakes realism, however, real-life competence suffers. This is true of both uniformed and plainclothes officers, and has long been a serious problem. Fairbairn and Sykes, in their landmark book, "Shooting to Live," (Paladin Press), state flatly their opposition to striving for scores and points. In their view, this defeats the need to train realistically and learn to fire quickly and decisively.

In-Service Training. Refresher courses are always necessary. While firearms qualification is now standard, few departments pay much attention to tactical training. There are several ways in which plainclothes squad commanders can ensure that their officers remain mentally sharp and tactically aware.

One way is by periodic departmental or squad seminars. Each session focuses on a particular topic, such as the "high-risk arrest of the month."

Another way is periodic briefings on what's new in policies, procedures, and equipment. This often touches upon survival, and officers should have an opportunity to learn and to comment on matters which can affect their lives.

Studying case histories is another technique. Soliciting accounts of

risky incidents from other agencies can provide a source of topics for discussion and scenarios for run-throughs and tactical analysis. If the commander works out a reciprocal arrangement with his counterparts in other agencies, this can lead to valuable exchanges of information.

In so doing, it's important not to dwell unnecessarily on those that ended in disaster. This is the negative approach that leads to failure to learn on the part of the students. Instead, the commander should also strive to present successful cases of high-risk arrests and confrontations, because they're valuable examples of what officers did correctly. There's the invaluable advantage of having live police officers to tell in their own words how they planned their approaches and then worked their plans. Lessons learned directly from the survivors are bound to be more authoritative than postmortem accounts by people who weren't even there when it happened.

A Balanced Picture

Training doesn't stop at the doors of the academy. It must continue throughout the officer's career because situations and procedures change. Training also helps the experienced officer keep mentally alert, which ultimately is the key to survival.

Chapter Twelve

EQUIPMENT

Plainclothes officers are more lightly equipped than the uniformed force because they need less equipment on the person. They rarely carry large flashlights, and never carry citation books. Sidearms tend to be "snubbies," and even handcuffs may be the lightweight aluminum models. Instead of a large leather duty belt, the detective is likely to have a compact, light, and even fashionable shoulder system or ankle holster.

In this section, we'll be showing specific brands and models. This is because we've found these to be well-made and very serviceable. There are other good brands, however, and no doubt each reader will have his favorites.

We'll start off with a long look at firearms.

Chapter Thirteen

FIREARMS

The plainclothes weapon may be a cut-down version of the duty sidearm, or a totally different article. Traditional practice was for the uniformed force to carry a four or five-inch barreled revolver, while detectives were equipped with a two-inch "Detective Special" or "Chief's Special." With the increasing recognition of the virtues of auto pistols, these flat and compact sidearms have been seeing more use.

Plainclothes Handguns

Many service sidearms have compact versions. Four-inch barrel police revolvers often have "snubby" versions with two-inch barrels. Many service auto pistols likewise have cut-down versions. In most cases, shrinking the weapon produces either loss of bullet velocity from the shorter barrel, or loss in ammunition capacity with the smaller frame. This is why we see snubby revolvers with five-shot cylinder instead of six. Some compact pistols sacrifice both. As we'll see, performance degradation is not as serious as it seems.

Stopping Power

This is one of the most over-done topics related to weapons use. The term is both meaningless and misleading. It's meaningless because all stopping power calculations, whether done by formula or by computer, are based on the effects of a single bullet. No police agency issues single-shot pistols to its officers.

It's misleading because it suggests that some handgun rounds are very effective for stopping an attacker. In reality, handguns are marginal weapons, and almost always require several hits to put down an assailant. Even rifles and shotguns don't always produce one-shot stops.

Another point worth noting is that shot placement is more important than any other single factor in deciding the outcome of a shooting. Training officers in effective combat shooting will have better practical results than requiring them to carry more powerful weapons.

This last point is especially important for plainclothes officers who might feel that they're sacrificing vitally-needed power for concealability when they choose small handguns for duty. It's reassuring to know that "It's not what you've got; it's what you do with it that counts."

Although we accept that multiple shots are usually necessary, let's not exaggerate the need for ammunition capacity. Over many years, gunfight statistics have shown that most shoot-outs are over with two or three shots. Of course, if the one in which you're involved requires more, you've still got a couple of extras even in a snubby five-shot revolver. A snubby auto pistol provides eight or more rounds without reloading. Good tactics provide the space-time cushion to allow reloading if necessary.

There's also the problem of multiple opponents. This happens often enough so that most police officers want to carry spare ammo. If we assume that it takes two or three handguns rounds to put down one attacker, it's easy to see that a revolver will run dry very quickly, and the huge ammunition capacity of a double-column magazine isn't as excessive as it first appears.

Revolver vs. Auto Pistol

This is a dying controversy. The two types of handguns used to be far apart in characteristics, but this difference has faded somewhat with the new crop of auto pistols. The autos of the last decade have become much more reliable, and are just as easy to operate as the best police revolvers. Because of their flat shapes, they have always been more concealable. The newest models, such as the SIG/SAUER P225, and the SIG/SAUER P230, are double-action, just as are police revolvers. However, after the first shot they fire single-action. The Glock 17 has a different system in which the pistol always starts at half-cock, and pulling the trigger brings the striker back to full cock before releasing it to fire the round. As auto pistols have become simpler in operation, they have gained increasing acceptance in law enforcement. While it would be misleading to say that the revolver's day is over, both police agencies and individual law officers are turning towards auto pistols today.

An important difference between revolvers and autos is, and will continue to be, reloading. With revolvers, it's necessary to push out the fired shells before reloading. Auto pistols require only removing the empty magazine and replacing it with a full one. Reloading a revolver is

usually slower, as it requires inserting fresh shells one by one. Adept revolver handlers can insert two at a time. Speedloaders allow inserting a cylinder-full of shells at once, but they're bulky compared to auto pistol magazines, and awkward for plainclothes officers to carry. Even with speedloaders, the most available is six fresh rounds. With auto pistols, the limit is the magazine capacity, and this can be up to 17 rounds. By the time this book is in print, there will be available extra-capacity magazines for auto pistols, which will provide a couple of extra rounds in the same volume.

It's true that most shoot-outs don't require more than two or three shots. There are exceptions, though, and police officers tend to prefer being prepared to being sorry.

Let's look at a few handguns suitable for detective carry:

Smith & Wesson Model 60

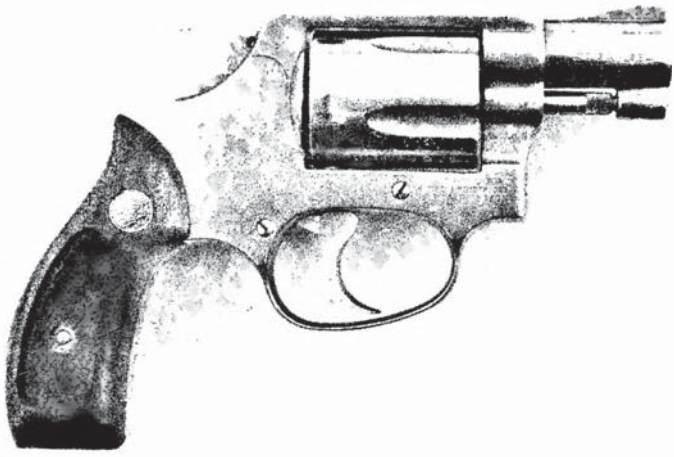


Figure 44. This compact five-shot revolver is the stainless "Chief." It's also available with a three-inch barrel. An important point is not to put oversize grips on it. If it doesn't fit your hand, get a bigger weapon.

This is the stainless steel version of the well-known five-shot "Chief." This two- or three-inch barrel revolver is the smallest that's practical, and is chambered for the .38 Special.

Smith & Wesson Model 49

Figure 45. This nickel-plated revolver is a "Chief" with a shrouded hammer. It's a good pocket gun.

The revolver in this photograph is nickel plated, and is a variant of the "Chief" models. This one is known as the "Bodyguard," and has a hammer shroud built into the frame. This feature prevents snagging clothing with the hammer spur in a hurried draw.

Both of these are small-frame revolvers, with small grips. They're comfortable for people with small hands, but those with larger hands may prefer over-size grips. This diminishes concealability. If you have large hands, work hard at firing this type of revolver with the factory stocks. You might be surprised to find that you can handle it accurately enough despite the small grips, especially at normal "combat" distances.

Smith & Wesson Model 469.

Figure 46. The S&W Model 469 is a compact double-column 9mm auto with a bobbed hammer. Its twelve-round capacity allows a lot of firing before reloading. Quickness of reloading is a point of superiority with auto pistols. Also, a reload provides twelve fresh rounds, not only five.

This is a "chopped" version of the larger double-action S&W autos, such as the Model 459. This is in caliber 9mm Luger, and uses a 12-round, double-column magazine.

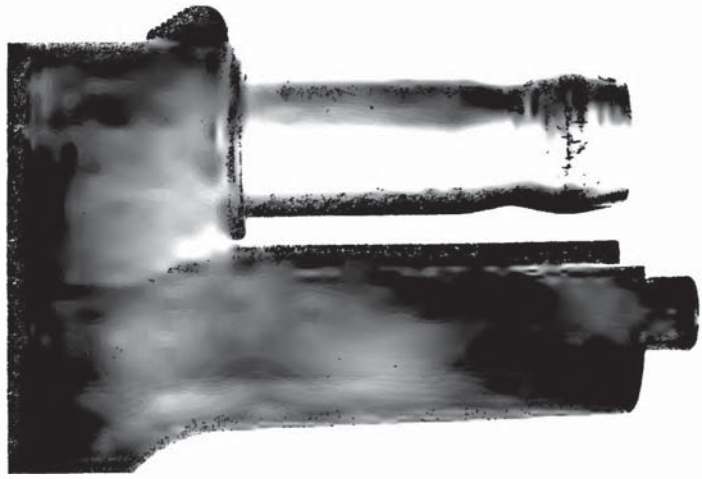


Figure 47. This design feature on the M469 is worth a close look. The spherical barrel section reduces clearance and increases accuracy.

The front of the barrel has a spherical section, which allows closer tolerances in the barrel bushing. This feature, borrowed from the S&W target pistol, produces better accuracy than would be possible with a straight barrel. However, clever as this engineering feature is, it's useless at the close ranges at which police-felon shoot-outs almost always take place.

Glock 17

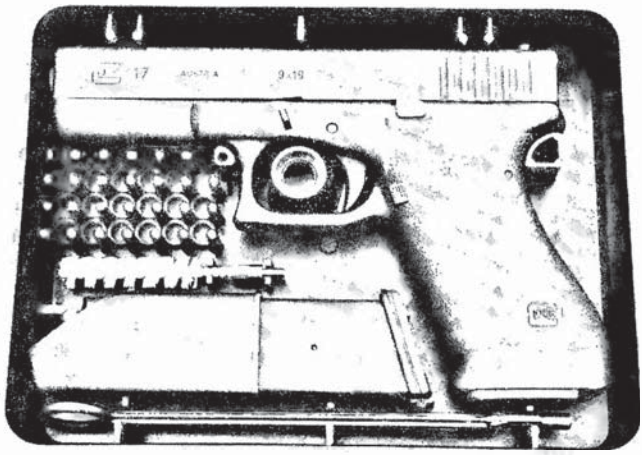


Figure 48. The Glock 17 comes in a plastic box with extra magazine, loading tool, and cleaning rod. The plastic frame has steel inserts for slide rails. The Glock is extremely reliable. All safeties are internal, and it's necessary only to pull the trigger to fire.

This is a full-size 9mm auto pistol, included here only because of its light weight (25 oz. with empty magazine) and unique features. With this action system, trigger pull remains the same for the first and subsequent shots. There is no external safety, and a trigger block and firing pin block keep this weapon from firing until the trigger is all the way back. The double-column magazine holds 17 rounds. A compact version, known as the Glock 19, holds 15 rounds in the magazine, and is about 3/4" shorter in both height and length.

Heckler & Koch P7

Figure 49. The Heckler & Koch P7 is the "squeeze-cocker." Firing requires squeezing the front strap lever, then the trigger. It's also extremely reliable. This version, with the butt-heel magazine release, is best for concealed carry, because the magazine release does not protrude and can't snag on clothing.

This unusual 9mm handgun is known coloquially as the "squeeze-cocker." Its compact dimensions allow use both in uniform and in civilian clothes. This M8 model has an eight-round clip, and for those who want more ammunition capacity there's a double-column model available, the M13, with 13 rounds and a side magazine release.

SIG/SAUER P230

Figure 50. The SIG/SAUER P225 holds eight rounds. First shot is double-action, and the rest are single-action. A decocking lever makes the pistol safe if it's necessary to stop shooting.

This is a compact 9mm auto with a single-column, 8-round magazine. Trigger pull is double-action for the first shot, and single-action for follow-up shots. A "decocking" lever brings the hammer down to half-cock when you're finished firing. This particular pistol has tritium sights, for low-light shooting.

SIG/SAUER P230

Figure 51. Thee SIG/SAUER P230 fires .380ACP cartridges, and is significantly more compact than most other auto pistols. First shot is double-action, the rest single-action, and a decocking lever makes the weapon safe.

This very compact pistol is made in caliber .380ACP, has a seven-round magazine, and is available in both blue and stainless. The blue steel and alloy model weighs 19 oz. and in stainless it's 25 oz. The "decocking" lever works like the one on the P225, but the magazine release is in the butt-heel.

Backup Guns

This is still a controversial topic, partly because of faulty logic and partly because of different needs in different parts of the country. The basic fact is that very few people understand the purposes of a backup gun. Let's lay them out clearly, so that we may proceed with evaluating the needs in various situations:

1. The backup gun is for personal defense if the officer is disarmed. Disarmed? Yes, disarmed. FBI figures have consistently shown that about 20 percent of officers killed each year are done in with their service weapons.

2. Drawing a second gun is quicker than reloading.

These are the facts. The judgments you want to draw from them are up to you. If you work in an area where assaults against police officers

happen every day, this is a compelling reason to carry a backup gun. Let's note, realistically, that as a plainclothes officer with a concealed weapon, you're somewhat less likely to be disarmed than your uniformed counterpart.

If you work in a locale where most uniformed officers don't wear body armor because it's so peaceful, you may well be reluctant to bother with a backup gun. We won't argue with you, or preach that you must always be vigilant because you never know when you'll run into a threat. Consider yourself lucky to work in such a placid jurisdiction. Most police officers don't. They work in areas which are neither very good nor very bad, which makes the decision regarding a backup gun harder.

Let's consider reloading. We all know that the average gunfight takes about 2.6 rounds, or a figure very close to that. Purists feel that if you can't do the job with six rounds, you're unlikely to be able to do it at all. They may be right. However, let's look beyond the statistics. If you carry a revolver, you have twice as much ammunition as you need to handle the "average" gunfight. You have to face the prospect that the next situation you encounter may not be "average" or even close to it. If you're facing multiple opponents, you'll be happy to have as much ammunition as you can carry. Where will you carry it?

Reloading with concealed ammunition can be very slow, even slower than drawing another concealed weapon. If you can, you'll want to reload behind cover because this is tactically safest.

Let's lay out one final point about the use of the backup weapon. It should be of the same make and type as your service weapon. Absolutely. No exceptions.

Why this hard line? The reason is that, in the stress of a shoot-out, you're working at a disadvantage if you have to pick up another weapon that operates differently from your service weapon. You'll have no time to relearn, or to adapt. The grip may be different, and throw off your shooting. If you find the safety or magazine release on the other side, or if, in a revolver, the cylinder latch goes forward instead of back, you'll lose time trying to remember which way to operate the weapon. If you carry speedloaders for a six-shot cylinder and your backup is a five-shot, your reloading will be hampered, whether you're behind cover or not. If your backup is a 9mm or .380 ACP auto pistol, and all you've got in your pocket is .38 Special, it's hopeless.

The best backup gun is a cut-down or compact model of the service weapon. A two-inch revolver serves as a good backup to a four-inch. It

can also be a perfect backup for another two-inch. In auto pistols, most top manufacturers provide compact versions of their service autos. This choice totally eliminates confusion.

Throwaways

Further clouding the backup gun issue is the assumption by some that a backup gun is the same as a "throwaway" gun. Not necessarily, but often the difference is only one of intent. Some police agencies have strict rules that any weapon carried by one of its officers must be inspected by the departmental armorer, and that the officer must qualify with it. The result is that there's a record of the weapon's belonging to the officer, which rules out using it as a "throwaway." If senior officers hold surprise inspections, any unregistered weapon found on an officer can lead to a suspicion regarding its real purpose.

It's an unfortunate fact that throwaway guns have been used by some American police officers. More unfortunate is penalizing honest and upright officers because of the actions of a few. A strict departmental policy regarding inspection and qualification with backup weapons can satisfy everyone's needs.

Weapons for Undercover Officers

It used to be that undercover officers had to take care to carry only weapons that were not standard with police departments because drug dealers and other offenders would immediately think "police special" if they saw a weapon resembling the standard-issue revolvers. This is why undercover officers often used small-caliber auto pistols and/or derringers as armament.

Today, with the proliferation and expanded variety of weapons carried by both police officers and civilians, the distinction between official weapons and others has blurred. Drug dealers often have high-capacity 9mm auto pistols, and even submachineguns of the sort used by police agencies. An undercover officer doesn't need to worry that sight of his Browning Hi-Power or SIG/SAUER P-226 will scream "police special" to his underground contacts. If questioned regarding his weapon, a simple explanation that he carries it "for protection" is usually enough.

This is all to the good. Undercover officers can now carry adequate weapons, instead of being forced to depend on derringers and other marginal or unsafe pistols. Derringers have reputations for accidental discharges, and it's a good idea to avoid them.

The Off-Duty Weapon

There's the same lack of consistency between police agencies regarding the off-duty weapon as there is for the backup gun. Some allow any weapon the officer wishes, others require inspection and qualification, and yet others have stricter rules. A simple solution to the problem of the off-duty weapon is to carry the service weapon off-duty as well as on-duty. A handgun is not very large or heavy, and with minimal effort you can carry your service weapon fairly comfortably.

Weapon Security

Law officers have a special responsibility to ensure that their weapons don't fall into the wrong hands. This goes beyond taking normal precautions against burglary at home. Criminal investigators working in a normal detective squad room often see suspects passing within a few feet of their desks, and may even interview suspects at their desks. Leaving a weapon where a suspect can gain access to it by simply reaching out, or by opening an unlocked drawer or locker, can lead to tragic consequences.

A critical point comes when plainclothes officers book suspects. If the plainclothes officer does the fingerprinting, the suspect gets a good opportunity to snatch his weapon. If you're the one taking a suspect's fingerprints, always, repeat, always lock your handgun away first. Remember that your back will be partly turned towards the suspect, and you won't be able to see what he's doing with his free hand. However, he'll know that both of yours are tied up manipulating his hand on the ink pad and fingerprint card. There has been at least one incident of a suspect snatching a detective's gun in exactly this way.

This is why it's wise, especially in older buildings in which the architecture doesn't separate suspect handling areas from detectives' work areas, to keep all weapons either on the person or locked away. Another security precaution is to search all suspects brought in, although they've already been searched upon arrest. Inside the squad room or interrogation room, officers can conduct a more thorough search. If it's necessary, they can do a strip-search.

A stricter security measure, which the bureau commander can adopt at his discretion, is to require all plainclothes officers to lock their weapons away upon entering the office. The commander may decide that it's not necessary to be armed on the premises. There are usually enough officers to handle any suspect who becomes combative without the use of sidearms.

A low-cost accessory that allows securing the handgun in plain sight is the "Gunlock." This screws to a beam in a wall, and consists of two bars which fit through the trigger guard to prevent operating the weapon. A hole in the thicker bar accepts a padlock to secure the weapon. It's also possible to mount the Gunlock to a metal surface, such as a filing cabinet, by using machine bolts and nuts.

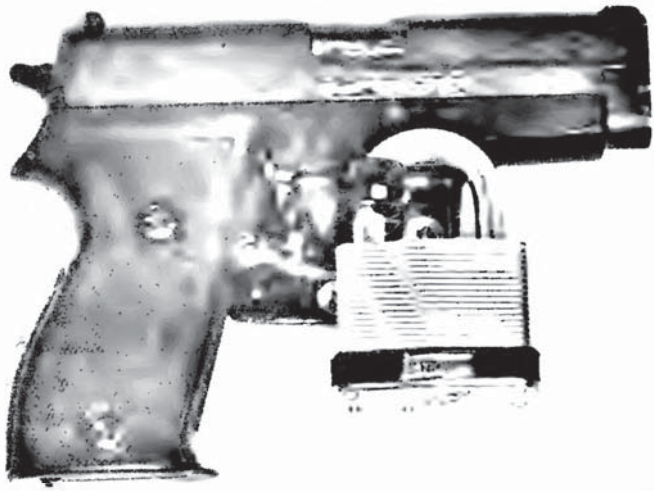


Figure 52. The Gunlock holds the handgun securely to a wall, or a metal structure. A heavy padlock secures the weapon, which can be kept loaded. There's no way the weapon can fire while locked in.

This is available from Police Gun Lock Corp., P.O. Box 24, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, Phone: (800) 262-6001, Att: Kenneth L. Battcher.

Ammunition

This is as controversial as the choice of weapons. The decision regarding what ammunition to use becomes simpler once we acknowledge that there's no "wonder bullet" that will unfailingly put down an attacker.

For the individual officer, the question of what ammunition to use has a very simple answer: You use what your department tells you to use. The police administrator who has to make the choice has to consider several aspects.

One is standardization. Supply is easier when all officers use the same

cartridge. Another is cartridge type and power. Good general practice, as well as avoiding liability, suggest that the training and qualification rounds be of equivalent power. Qualification ammunition can be reloads, but loaded to the same pressure and recoil as duty ammo. Using low-powered, mid-range, or target ammo for qualification helps attain higher qualification scores, but in court it can look like falsification of qualifying scores. More importantly, an officer who is surprised by the more intense sound and recoil of duty ammunition, after training with weaker loads, may be at an increased risk of being killed or injured. There is, however, another viewpoint. Some experienced shooters feel that, in the heat of combat, the officer won't notice the blast and recoil.

Cartridge stopping power isn't truly important. Every manufacturer producing police loads can show paper stopping power figures, and produce testimonials regarding his bullet's expansion and other attributes.

The accepted criteria for cartridge effectiveness change with the times. Many years ago, the large diameter, heavy, slow-moving bullet was king. The era of the high-speed hollow-points started during the late 1960s and is still with us. However, some of today's "experts" are suggesting that hollow-points aren't all they're cracked up to be, and that bullet penetration is the key to doing effective damage. The heavy and slow bullet is therefore making a slight comeback.

Key questions for the person choosing duty ammunition are ease of use and overpenetration. The cartridge mustn't be too powerful for most officers, including females, to handle. This is a crucial point. Any attempt to issue one type of ammunition to male officers and another, weaker type, to females, will draw accusations of "sexism." This may rule out the magnums for general issue.

Bullet effectiveness is, as we have seen, always controversial. Overpenetration is not. In urban areas, the danger of injuring innocent parties with bullets that penetrate several walls is real. So is the danger of overtravel. This is another reason for high-speed, light-weight bullets that lose their velocity quickly and don't penetrate excessively. This cuts down the weapon's effective range, but most police-felon shoot-outs are across the width of a room, and range isn't important.

One type of cartridge that has very little risk of overpenetration and overtravel is the Equaloy. This uses a solid aluminum bullet weighing 38.5 grains, which comes out of a four-inch revolver at over 2100 feet per second. Velocity drops quickly with range, and the bullet becomes nonlethal before it reaches 200 yards.

Weapon Systems

The plainclothes and off-duty officer has to consider not only his primary weapon, but a second or backup gun, and ammunition for them. In many cases, however, there will be a departmental policy and the individual officer won't have to make a decision.

Chapter Fourteen

HOLSTERS AND OTHER CARRY SYSTEMS

These are just as important for plainclothes officers as they are for the uniformed force.

Weapon Concealment

The basic rule is that the more clothing worn, the more opportunity to conceal a weapon. Two extremes will illustrate the point. One concerns police officers patrolling California beaches who needed a weapon that would fit inside a bathing suit. The small and flat Raven automatic in .25ACP was a natural choice. Another example is the officer assigned to protective duty during a northern winter. A shotgun on a sling fits easily under his overcoat. In between these two lie the ankle holsters, shoulder rigs, and other assorted paraphernalia of concealed carry.

Accessibility Versus Concealability

A quick look at various types of holsters and carry systems shows one definite rule: The more concealed the weapon, the less accessible it will be. Obviously, a belt holster worn outside the clothing is very accessible. One worn under a jacket is less easy to reach, but doesn't require the bending over and reaching down that drawing from an ankle holster does.

There are a few exceptions, as we'll see. Carrying a pistol in a paper bag allows a very quick first shot, although the usefulness of this carry mode is very limited.

Closely related to accessibility is weapon security. "Snatching" the weapon is a real threat, but it happens mostly to uniformed offers. This is why we see a profusion of "snatch-proof" and "high-security" duty holsters for uniformed officers.

To "snatch" a weapon, the felon must first know where it is. If the weapon is concealed, he won't be able to "snatch" it as easily as if it were exposed to view. Reaching it requires penetrating one or more layers of clothing, which compounds the problem for the "snatcher."

A greater danger is the weapon's falling out during a foot chase or

other exertion. This can be embarrassing and even dangerous. One plainclothes officer told how his pistol fell out of his ankle holster during a pursuit. Winston Churchill's bodyguard, Inspector Thompson, put his pistol back in his waistband after cleaning it, and shot himself when it slipped down his pants leg.

Comfort and Convenience

Obviously, a concealment holster should be comfortable, but in many instances comfort is not as important as it is for the uniformed officer who must wear his sidearm during an entire shift. You also can't allow comfort and convenience to outweigh weapon accessibility or security. The clip-on belt holster is very popular because it's convenient to don or remove.

Plainclothes investigators spend many hours in their offices, out of contact with the public in general and with suspects in particular. This is why many remove their weapons and place them in a drawer. In so doing, it's important to consider weapon security, and to lock the drawer or locker.

The plainclothes officer assigned to special duties may need a holster comfortable enough to wear almost 24 hours a day. Detectives sometimes draw dignitary protection assignments, and these require carrying weapons at all times while on duty. In this country, protective officers tend to keep low profiles, avoiding the appearance of a "goon squad" that is the norm in certain other countries. This dictates keeping all weapons strictly out of sight, although still accessible.

Comfort is always very subjective. This is why we find many holster types and brands on the market. Some dislike the binding that a shoulder harness produces. Others find ankle holsters very uncomfortable. Within each holster group, there are many different designs, each subtly different from others, and each appealing to different users.

Holster Materials

There are two common materials used for holsters, which are made in several basic types. Most are adaptable for concealed carry. Leather is the traditional material, and many millions of leather holsters have served police officers well over the decades. Leather had to do because it was the best material available for a long time, but now two other aspects of holster wear enter the picture. Holster users are demanding more from their leather gear, as the shapeless "pouch" holster is almost out of use.

Higher quality means better construction, and this increases cost. Leather holsters are very expensive today, and a good system can easily run over one hundred dollars. A uniform duty belt, with holster and accessory pouches, can run about two hundred dollars.

This is why synthetic material holsters are gaining favor. These are made of Nylon, Perlon, Propex, and other materials, and are much less costly. Synthetic materials are mildew-resistant and require less hand work.

Holster Types and Carry Systems

Holster types are belt, shoulder, and ankle. There are some hybrids and oddball types, such as a thigh holster which the plainclothes officer reaches by opening his fly, but these are rare. The trend has been towards simplicity because this speeds the draw.

Strong Side Belt Holsters. This places the weapon closest to the gun hand, and is very convenient. A position over the appendix enables a very quick draw. This is where the hand falls naturally, and this eliminates much wasted motion. However, concealment requires keeping the jacket closed, although not necessarily buttoned. Carrying the holster on the hip keeps it farther back out of sight, but changes the body's profile under a suit jacket. An officer with wide shoulders and narrow hips might be able to get away with this, but one with a straight build will find this position pushing the jacket outward in a tell-tale manner. A behind-the-hip carry is probably the worst of the three. It places the weapon almost out of reach. The weapon will dig into the back when sitting in a chair or car seat. It requires elbow room to draw. Finally, bending over causes the weapon to show its profile through the jacket.

Figure 53 shows the Galco Hi-Jak, made for a strong side belt carry for the right-handed shooter. This leather holster has a thumbsnap safety strap for security. With a large pistol such as the Glock 17 pictured here, it's best worn under a heavy jacket for maximum concealment.

With a smaller handgun, such as a caliber .380ACP SIG/SAUER P-230, the Hi-Jak can conceal the weapon under a light or medium-weight jacket.

Cross-Draw Belt Holsters. Some officers prefer the cross-draw. With the concealed carry, having the weapon butt forward isn't as objectionable as with the pistol exposed, which would facilitate snatching. A more valid objection is that bringing the weapon out from a cross-draw holster involves "covering" anyone to the side. This can be very objectionable in

Figure 53. The Galco Hi-Jak leather belt holster with metal thumbsnap. The Hi-Jak is for strong side draw.

firing practice, in qualification, or on the street, and the rangemaster may forbid use of such holsters.

Figure 55 shows a holster that works for both strong-side carry and cross-draw, and uses a J-hook under the belt to retain the holster in place. Without a secure retention system, the holster can come along with the pistol in a hurried draw.

Shoulder Holster Systems. There are several designs, each with its quirks and strong points. All require drawing across the chest.

Vertical

This is the traditional shoulder holster design, and is well suited for drawing up and out without unbuttoning the jacket. It requires a tie-

Figure 54. The size of the weapon has a lot to do with concealment potential. A small handgun, such as the P230 depicted here, is much easier to conceal than a full-frame auto pistol.

down strap so that the holster doesn't come up with the gun during the draw. Depending on the wearer's build, it may also be difficult to reach across the body far enough to grip the weapon securely.

The holster depicted in Figure 56 is for large weapons, such as the SIG P-220 shown. The harness has tie-downs on both sides, because of the size and weight of the weapon.

Parallel or Angled

It's easier to reach across the body and draw in a straight line than to lift the weapon up and out. Officers who wear light clothing often

Figure 55. The Galco "Hooker" is especially suited for plainclothes officers because it's easy to put on and quick to remove. Instead of having to thread the belt through a belt loop, the J-hook slips under the belt to secure the holster.

find a parallel or angled holster carry better for this reason.

The leather Galco SSH, Figure 57, is a horizontal draw shoulder holster. The limitation is that, except for very deep-chested individuals, the weapon can't be too bulky. A snap at the bottom is for an optional tie-down.

The opposite side magazine pouches work with metal snaps and counterbalance the weight of the weapon. A tab on the bottom accepts a handcuff case or tie-down.

Like many good shoulder systems, the Special Weapons Products

Figure 56. The Galco vertical "Big Game" holster is for large-frame handguns, and works best with a large person and heavy clothing.

"Badger," Figure 59, holds the weapon on one side, and accessories on the other, as counter-weights. The double magazine pouch and handcuff loop help balance the weight of the SIG P230, but a tie-down on the off-side is still advisable. Note that the holster's design is such that no tie-down is necessary for the holster pouch, which is faired into the body's contours. Adjustable nylon straps, using a thumbsnap, retain the weapon.

Figure 57. The Galco Model SSII holds the weapon horizontally, which some feel is the best position for a quick straight-out draw. The metal snap is for the optional tie-down.

Upside-Down

Some feel more comfortable pulling the handgun down from under the arm-pit. Hence, the upside-down holsters. Most modern designs, with their adjustable harnesses, allow the user to adjust the angle of the barrel to his need. Most don't go so far as to set them for a pure barrel-up position.

The Galco Falcon, Figure 60, is an innovative upside-down holster. The holster snaps through the trigger guard. To draw, it's necessary to push the gun up and twist outward.

Inside-Pants Holsters There are several types of inside the pants holsters. Some are rigid or semi-rigid. Other are soft and collapse after the draw. The theory behind the rigid ones is that they allow reholstering with one hand in an emergency. This can be convenient when you need the other to control a suspect. If you have the collapsing type of holster, don't feel too badly about it. You can simply put your weapon in a side pocket

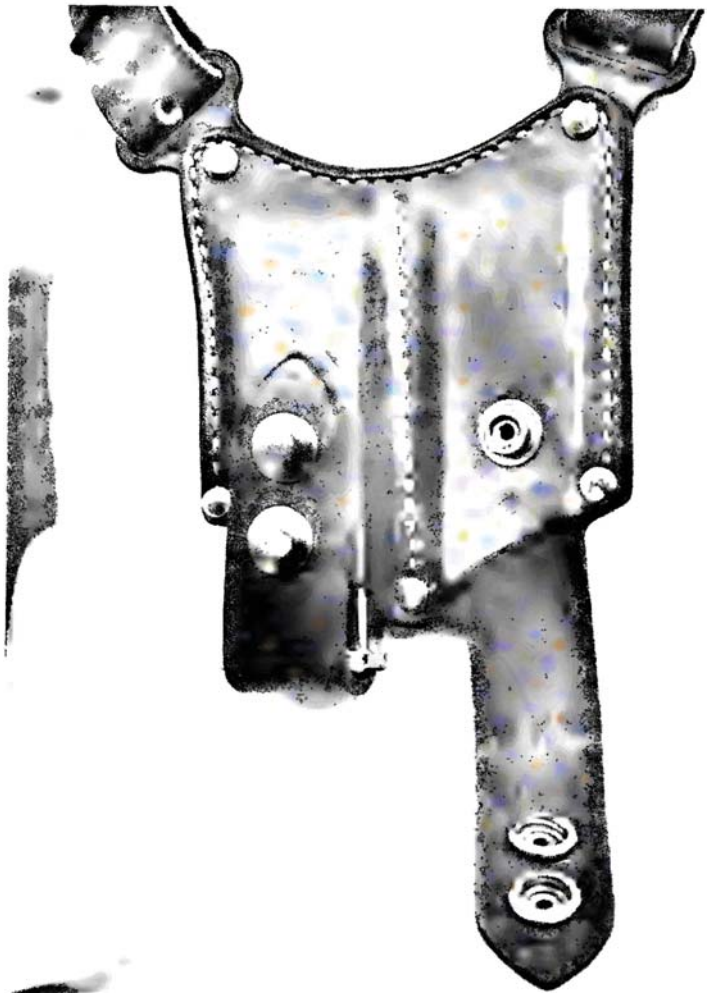


Figure 58. The SSII's off-side magazine pouches are important both as counterweights and to hold reserve ammunition.

while you finish handcuffing your suspect. A serious problem with the collapsing inside holster is the danger of the holster being drawn along with the weapon unless there's a solid belt attachment.

Ankle Holsters. Ankle holsters are perhaps the most controversial of all types. There are successful designs made of both leather and synthetic materials. Some depend on a safety strap to hold the weapon, while others use an elastic material. These require drawing the handgun

Figure 59. The "Badger" is probably the most concealable of the shoulder holsters because the flat nylon pouch blends the weapon's outline in with the body. The off-side accessory harness holds extra ammo and handcuffs.

against the resistance of the elastic. Some ankle holsters have calf straps, somewhat like garters, and a descender to support the weight of the holster. Others use the ankle strap and pad, and depend on the holster's remaining in the narrow of the ankle.

The Cobra "Hugger," Figure 62, has a Velcro closure and a calf strap. This leather holster uses a thumbsnap to release the weapon.

The Galco Ankle Holster, Figure 63, uses a calf strap and riser for extra support.

The ankle holster is a favorite among officers who can't wear another type, for whatever reason. Climate is the usual one. In the Southwest, many plainclothes officers and police administrators use ankle holsters because the temperature is too high to allow wearing a jacket comfortably.

The main disadvantage of an ankle holster is slowness of draw. It usually requires using both hands to draw the weapon. One lifts the pants leg while the other draws the gun.

Another advantage of the ankle holster, maximum concealment, is disappearing. Some detectives and undercover officers used to use the ankle holster because it would avoid the risk of having the outline of the weapon showing where people expected it to be. When ankle holsters were new, most people would look for a concealed weapon under the

Figure 60. The Galco "Falcon" is a skeleton rig and very light.

arm or at the belt-line. Today, knowledge of ankle holsters is widespread, and a suspicious person can quickly do a "bump frisk" with the leg to detect the holster.

Boot Holsters. Some prefer holsters tucked or built into their boots. These have almost the same advantages and disadvantages as ankle holsters. One important difference is that a holster on the inside of the boot is much less detectable in a "bump frisk" than an ankle holster. Another is that, because it's necessary to expose the top of the boot instead of just the ankle, the draw is slower. An important point is that

Figure 61. There are several good inside-the-pants holsters with metal clips and safety straps. These slip down onto the pants or belt, if there is one.

any such holster should have a strap to secure the weapon, and if the holster is tucked into, instead of built into, the boot, there must be some provision to keep it from falling out during a foot pursuit.

The "Safepacker." This is a nylon pouch for hand carry, which holds the weapon and a reload of ammunition. The "Safepacker," Figure 66, doesn't look like a holster, which makes it suitable for undercover officers. The "Safepacker" comes in several sizes, for different handgun types, and includes a pouch for an extra magazine or a speedloader. A nylon strap looping through a ring closes with Velcro. This holster is also useful when the climate requires heavy clothing, which encumbers the draw from an inside holster. The disadvantages are that the "Safepacker" keeps one hand tied up, and that releasing the strap takes longer than releasing a thumbsnap. Further, in the event of a shoving match or fistfight, weapon retention becomes a major problem.

Figure 62. The Cobra "Hugger" is a top-quality leather ankle holster for those who feel that only the ankle band is necessary.

Loose in Waistband. Carrying the weapon under the belt isn't secure because you may not place it in exactly the same place each time. This means that you will have to look or grope for it, and the time you lose doing this can be costly in a firefight. Another problem is that it can easily fall out or fall through. In a punch-out or foot chase, a weapon that isn't secure can easily slip out from under the belt. If it slips down your pants, you will spend a few frantic seconds trying to shake it out into your hand. It can also drop right out onto the pavement. If it falls into the street, it can slip down a sewer, skid under a car, or slide over towards your suspect. A third problem is that, typically, only about three-quarters of the weapon's grip is exposed. This makes it even more difficult to draw the weapon and obtain a proper grip. None of these are healthy outcomes.

It's even worse if you choose the stylish behind-the-back carry. This places the handgun into the waistband over the spine. It's perhaps the worst possible place to carry the piece. If you're wearing a jacket, drawing will require clearing away a lot of cloth. If you're not wearing a coat, the gun's exposed and anyone coming up behind you can take your piece before you're aware of it.

By now, it should be clear that carrying a handgun loose in the waistband is dangerous both on the range and on the street. Bureau

Figure 63. The Galco Ankle Holster is made of synthetic material, and has a removable calf strap. Note the way the weapon's butt protrudes.

commanders and firearms instructors should eliminate this practice among all on-duty officers.

Belt Grips and Clips. A few belt grips and clips have been available on the market. There are two kinds. One is a belt clip with a lanyard that loops around the pistol's barrel or slide. The other is a belt clip which is attached to one of the pistol's grip plates. These are truly minimal retention systems, and their only advantage is lack of bulk. Police agencies, with an eye on liability, frown on these.

The Briefcase Carry. Carrying the handgun in a briefcase, or purse, along with a box of spare ammunition, is a favorite among some officers. This presumes that there will be adequate warning when something critical "comes down," allowing time to open the briefcase and withdraw the weapon.

Figure 64. Drawing from the ankle holster requires bending over and using both hands.

You'll find that drawing from a hinged briefcase is an almost hopeless task. This is especially true if you normally keep your briefcase locked. You should, if you have warning, remove the weapon and slip it into a pocket. Some insert it under their belts. This brings more problems than it solves. It hampers the draw without offering the security of a holster carry, and you should use this only as a temporary expedient. Using the briefcase is a poor choice, even if it contains a secure holster.

Figure 65. In locales where men normally wear boots, a boot holster is a choice. The advantage over the ankle holster is that it's not as easily detectable by a "hump frisk."

Bank Bags. Using a bank deposit bag as an expedient carry system has the advantage of simplicity, assuming you keep the bank bag unzipped. However, you may find it difficult to draw the weapon and you may have to plan on firing through the end of the bag. Further, the bank bag tends to attract attention. In some cases, such as a decoy operation against hit-and-run thieves preying on businessmen making night deposits, the bank bag carry can be credible.

Paper Bag and Other Carries. Carrying the handgun in a paper bag held in the hand is a technique useful for various undercover officers and for "stake-out" teams. The main value of this technique is that the

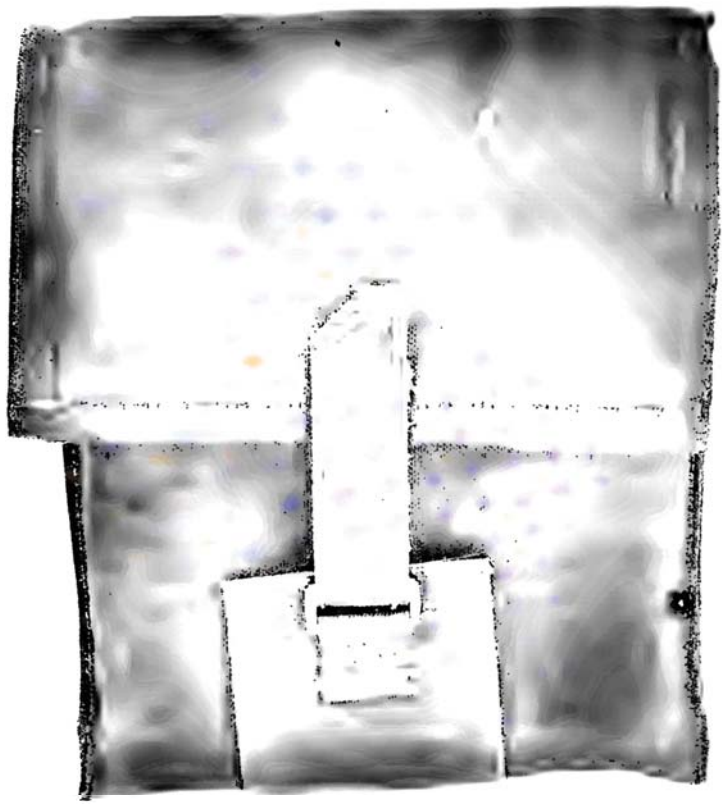


Figure 66. The "Safepacker" is a very unconventional holster system which masquerades as a ditty bag or purse. It's attractive for undercover officers.

weapon is already in the hand, and the officer has only to push a finger through the paper into the trigger guard to open fire.

Pocket Carry

Carrying the handgun in a pocket isn't common among law officers in the United States, but in some situations it can be worthwhile. In climates requiring heavy clothing, it's quicker and easier to reach in a coat pocket than to have to reach inside or under a heavy coat to draw from a belt or shoulder holster. An officer who uses the "FBI" behind-the-hip carry will find it almost "Mission Impossible" to draw from there when wearing heavy clothing.

Figure 67. Carrying the weapon inside the waistband is insecure. It can fall out during a chase, or even less strenuous activity.

Casually carrying the weapon in a pocket filled with other items causes grief. Keys, loose change, and other hard items can both scratch the weapon's finish and become tangled in the trigger guard. Anyone using a pocket carry will soon find out something else: the heavy handgun wears the pocket out very quickly. There are, however, pocket holsters. These are small rectangles of leather with holster pouches sewn on.

Carrying Extra Ammunition

This is a much-neglected topic. A reload or two provides a sense of security, even if you never need it. There are several ways to carry extra ammo, depending partly on the type of handgun you have.

"Loose change" is carrying the rounds loose in a pocket. This is hardly worth discussing because reloading is slower than any other system, and the cartridges strike against each other and anything else in the pocket.

"Speed Strips" are rubber strips which hold six rounds each, useful for reloading revolvers two rounds at a time. The advantage of a speed strip is that it's flat and compact. The disadvantage is that it's slower than a speedloader.

Speedloaders are quick and effective, but their drum-like shape makes them bulky. Despite their bulk, you might choose to carry them in a jacket pocket. If you carry more than one, they will rattle. There are some better ways, though.

Figure 68. The "Speed Strip" holds six rounds of .38 Special or caliber .357 Magnum ammunition, is flat for pocket carry, and allows the officer to load two at a time into his cylinder.

Figure 69. The speedloader, although more bulky, allows loading the entire cylinder in one move. Turning the knob releases the cartridges, allowing them to drop in.

One good way to carry speedloaders on the belt is the Safariland "Split-Six," Figure 70, which places three rounds in front of the belt, and three behind. This looks dressy, but it's necessary to undo the snap to get to the speedloader. Further, the "Split-Six" is not, at the time of this writing, available for five-shot revolvers.

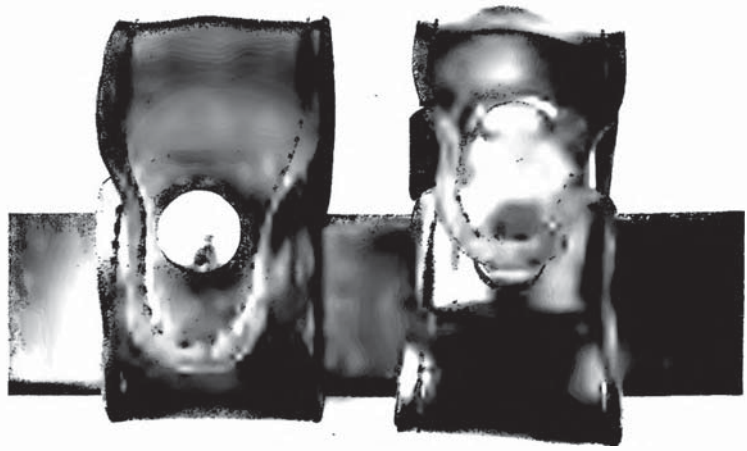


Figure 70. The main problem with speedloaders for plainclothes use is bulk. The Safariland "Split-Six" is one good choice for carrying speedloaders in plainclothes. Half the cartridges slip behind the belt. The others are in front. This reduces the profile.

Another way is the Ted Blocker Speedloader Belt Clip, Figure 71. This is a simple wire jig that holds the speedloader in place on the belt, and keeps it immediately accessible.

Auto pistol users can use a magazine belt pouch, which holds the magazine securely and allows quick access. There are many types, including nylon and leather models. Some are made for single-column magazines, and other for the bulkier double-column clips.

Wearing the Holster or Carry System

Any officer assigned to plainclothes duty must decide how he will make the transition from carrying a sidearm in an exposed holster to using a concealed carry. In some parts of the country, this distinction is blurred. In the southern states, the hot climate discourages wearing jackets, and some plainclothes officers carry their pistols openly in belt holsters. Others, however, use ankle holsters.

A common fault among those who carry their weapons concealed is that they don't practice drawing from the holster or other concealed carry. Perhaps some assume that having the weapon on the person will be enough, and that there won't be any problem in quickly producing it should the need arise. Not so. If you do this, you're betting your life on a false assumption.

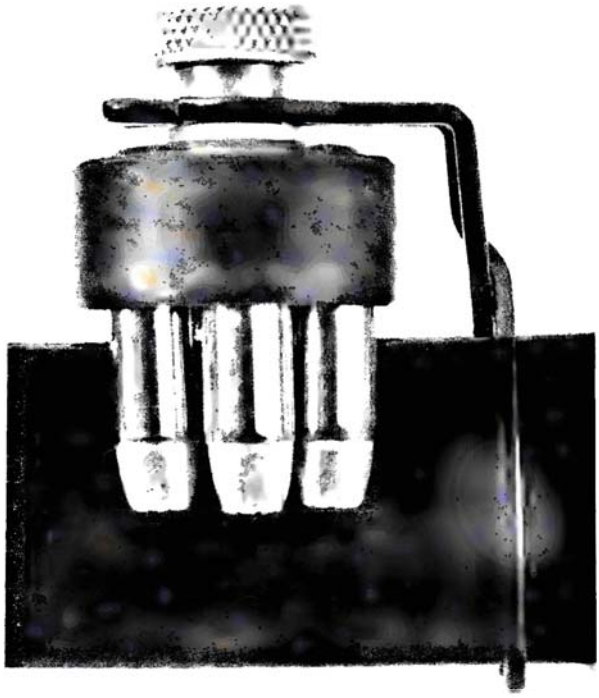


Figure 71. The Speedloader Belt Clip is simple and foolproof. Half in front of the belt, the rest in back.

Let's look at the problem of the off-duty uniformed officer, which is even more severe. He wears his service sidearm in a regulation holster on a regulation gunbelt every day. He's trained with this equipment at the academy, and he regularly qualifies with it. He has become accustomed to the weight of a handgun on his hip, and his hand reaches there when he needs the weapon. At end of watch, however, he is likely to change weapons, and leave his service sidearm in his locker or the trunk of his car. Instead, he dons an ankle holster, and a totally different pistol.

The heavy Model 19 gives way to a Walther PPK, a totally different weapon. Instead of relying on his "muscle memory" to find the weapon automatically at his waist, the officer now has to remember that it's at his ankle, and the sequence of steps for a draw is quite different from what he has practiced. Regulations may require him to carry the Walther with the safety on, a problem he doesn't face with the revolver. If he has to reload under stress, he can't swing open the cylinder, punch out the

shells, and reach for a speedloader, because the Walther reloads in an entirely different way.

Adapting to Another Holster. You must be aware, when you first try on a new holster or carry system, that you will have to relearn your drawing reflex and overcome a set of possible problems. Let's look at these one by one:

1. Fit. Does the new rig fit you properly? A shoulder holster should have its weight evenly distributed, and the better systems use the harness's off-side to hold extra ammunition or a set of handcuffs. You may, however, find that speedloaders are simply too bulky to carry under the arm.

If it's an ankle holster, does it fit without flopping or swinging around? Will you need a calf strap? In this regard, there's no agreement on calf straps among ankle holster users. Some love them. Others loathe them. Choose what's better for you.

Figure 72. The butt of the handgun protrudes so far that it shows through the pants leg. No need to "bump-frisk" here!

Choosing the right pants is also important. Tight pants will show the outline of the weapon, and any street-savvy punk will notice this. Another way to minimize the outline is to use an ankle holster which holds the

weapon at an angle, instead of with the barrel perpendicular to the calf. This brings the butt forward, blending it in with the leg.

Some ankle holsters let the gun go at a critical moment. Before wearing one on duty, test it thoroughly by jumping and running with it. If the weapon drops out, or even seems to come loose, make another choice.

2. Does your shoulder system have or need tie-downs? Some systems provide these to keep the weapon and accessories from flapping. This can be important during a chase.

3. Practice, practice, practice. Can you draw your weapon without looking? If not, your new carry system just isn't ready for the street. Don't kid yourself on this point. You might be able to fool the rangemaster during qualification, but if you have to take your eyes off a suspect while reaching for a weapon, you're in trouble. You also should be able to reach your badge, handcuffs, and extra ammunition without looking to see where they are.

Practice drawing while standing, sitting, in a car, and other situations that you can imagine coming up while you're on duty. You will probably have to qualify only from the standing position, but you can't assume that you will always be on your feet when a crisis comes.

Most importantly, practice in the manner you will carry the weapon on the street. If you wear it under a suit coat, you should **consistently** train with an old suit coat. If you use a zipped bank bag, qualify with the bag zipped at the beginning of each stage. If you can't qualify in the generous times allotted, draw your own conclusions about your chances of survival on the street.

Chapter Fifteen

ACCESSORIES

Plainclothes officers are more lightly-equipped than patrol officers, not needing citation books and other paraphernalia. Items they do carry are usually compact, lightweight versions of uniformed gear.

Handcuffs

Figure 73. These Hiatt aluminum handcuffs, weigh four ounces, and meet the Department of Justice's standard for handcuff strength.

Many plainclothes officers don't carry these. Those who do have available lightweight aluminum handcuffs. Steel handcuffs usually weigh about ten oz. A pair of aluminum ones is about four oz. (Anyone remember to bring the key?)

Detectives rarely carry cuff cases on their belts because of bulk. Instead, many loop them under the belt. Another way is to use them as a counter-weight for the handgun in a shoulder rig.

Nonlethal weapons

Although plainclothes officers are usually armed on duty, few carry any form of "nonlethal" or "less-lethal" weapon. This is a serious oversight. Many officers go through their entire careers without becoming involved in a shoot-out, but punch-outs happen very frequently. Likewise, plainclothes officers rarely have to use sidearms, but are more likely to need a baton, sap, or other device.

The Kubotan. This is the smallest non-lethal device, and is both

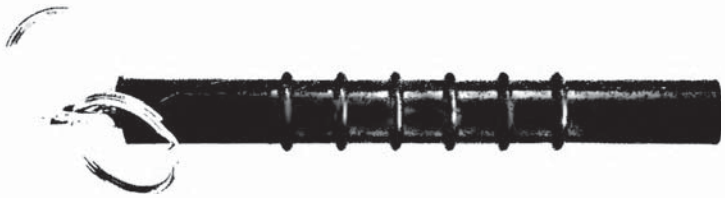


Figure 74. The Kubotan is a small plastic rod with a key ring loop at one end. It works well as a pain compliance weapon.

Figure 75. Using the Kubotan to grip the fingers is one technique of "pain compliance."

inexpensive and versatile. It's also useful as a key-ring. Made of high-strength plastic, it weighs about one ounce. It's not a "sap," but works fairly well as a pain compliance device for a come-along.

Figure 76. The Cobra P-9 is a collapsible baton about the size of a Kubotan. A telescoping section extends to form a minibaton.

Cobra Collapsible Batons. There are a variety of collapsible batons available in this line. The smallest and lightest, at two ounces, resembles the Kubotan:

The P-9. This is an extensible device the size of a Kubotan when closed and which extends to a 9" club. A flick of the wrist brings the extension tube out so that it "taper-locks". This allows swinging or jabbing, as the taper-lock won't collapse under normal impacts. Collapsing the P-9 requires rapping the end-knob on a hard surface. The P-9 has a key-ring, and a holster for belt wear is available. Light weight and small size are its main advantages, and it's very handy for a leverage pain compliance hold, as is the Kubotan.

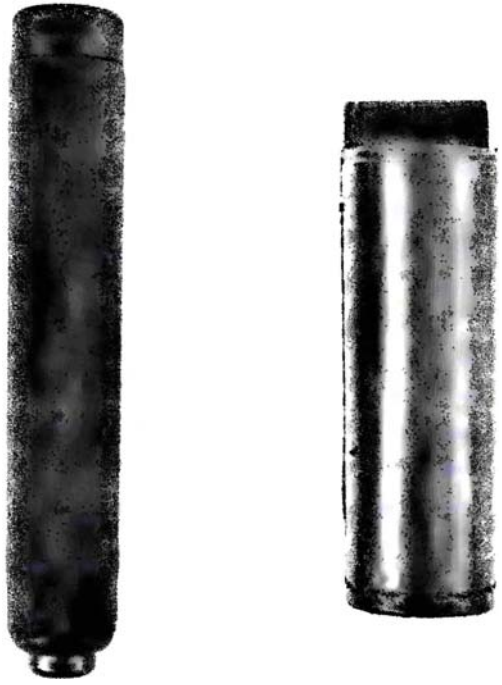


Figure 77. The Cobra #616 is six inches collapsed, and extends to sixteen inches. At fourteen ounces, it's a very effective medium baton.

The Model 616. A larger version that serves as a baton or judo stick is the 14-oz. Model 616. This baton has a foam-cushioned grip and is six inches long collapsed and 16 inches extended. Deploying requires drawing it with a flick of the wrist. It's heavy enough to inflict a dangerous injury. The manufacturer offers a training and certification course, which teaches blows to the arms and legs, avoiding the face and neck.

There are larger models available for those who prefer something stouter. The Model 716 is seven inches collapsed and 16 inches extended. The Model 926 is nine inches collapsed, and 26" respectively. Both have belt holsters for concealed carry.

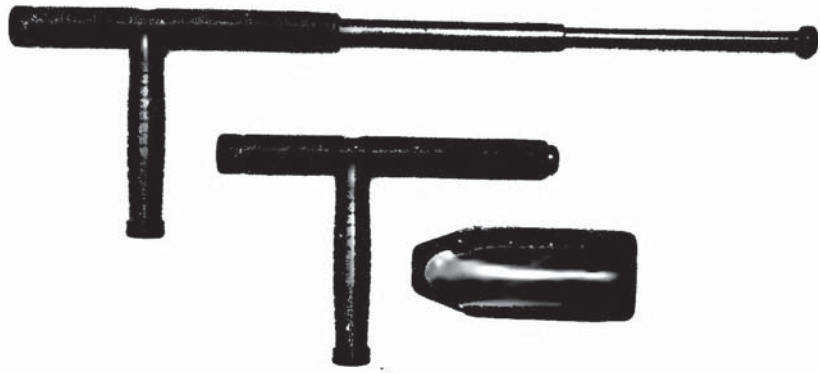


Figure 78. The Monadnock PR-16E is a collapsible version of the side-handle baton. The compact size makes it suitable for plainclothes carry.

The Monadnock PR-16E Side-Handle Baton. This is a light and compact telescoping version of the Monadnock PR-24 baton. It extends to 16" long when snapped open. Collapsed, it's only seven inches long, and fits conveniently in a belt holster. For officers trained in this type of baton, the PR-16E is familiar.

The Monadnock PR-18 Side-Handle Baton. This is a solid baton, designed to carry on a sling as with a shoulder holster. The solid side-handle may produce a bulge at the back of the jacket, except for thick-chested individuals. The 18" length allows sitting in a chair or a car seat without undue discomfort. A safety strap holds the baton in place.

Figure 79. The Monadnock PR-18 is solid, and it's designed for carry in a sling as shown.

Baton Holsters. Baton manufacturers also provide belt holsters. These allow low-profile carry, either on a uniform belt or suit belt under the jacket.

The baton holster may be on the right or left side, but should always be easy to reach. The reason is that an officer's more likely to need a baton than a firearm, because punch-outs are more common than shoot-outs.

Figure 80. Quick-detachable baton holsters for the Cobra series are designed for plainclothes use. However, Cobras also work well for pocket carry, because they have no sharp angles or edges.

Stun Guns. Stun guns have been controversial since their introduction. Exaggerated claims for their effectiveness have damaged the stun gun market, perhaps beyond repair.

Despite the loud denials of their manufacturers, they're based upon the cattle prod. Claims that they interrupt nerve impulses, thereby causing paralysis, are simply untrue, as tests have shown. Field experience demonstrated that stun guns are effective on between 70 and 90 percent of subjects, depending on the study.

Stun guns depend on pain and shock for effect, and the result is like being kicked in the testicles. This will put down most assailants, but someone in a frenzy, or high on drugs is less sensitive to pain. With most subjects, however, using the stun gun results in fewer emergency room

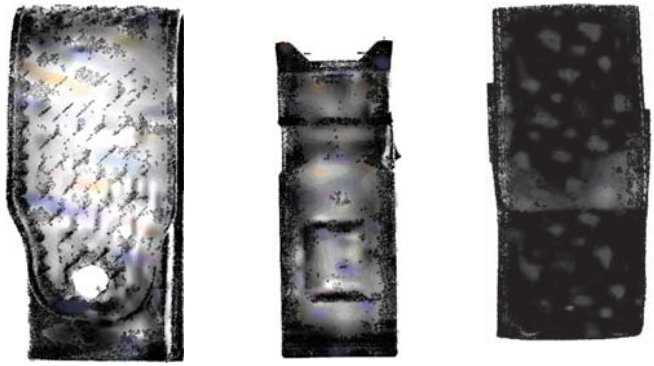


Figure 81. Stun guns, which are electronic incapacitation weapons, fit in leather or nylon holsters. The holster should cover the metal probes, otherwise a serious shock can result.

visits than the baton. This is important, with today's increasing prospects of liability.

There are both leather and nylon stun gun holsters. The leather one is preferable because it shields the stun gun's probes. Having them exposed is dangerous because it's too easy to trip the rocker switch, and if a seat belt does this while you're driving a car, you may have an accident.

The Mini-Flashlight

The invention of the high-intensity bulb has led to the mini-flashlight, with a lot of candlepower in a slim package.

There are several brands, such as Mag-Lite, Stream-Light, Sigma-Lite, and The Legend. Two work by turning the head, which operates the on/off switch as well as focusing the beam. The Sigma-Lite has a push-button switch at the rear. This makes one-hand operation quicker, pushing the button with the thumb or against the body. The push-button has two functions, "blip" and "latch." Blipping the light turns it on momentarily. Pressing harder latches it, and it will stay on until you push again to release it. The Legend has a rear push-button that's the same diameter as the body, and which also has a locking feature. The Legend also has serrated rubber sleeves on the head and body, which provide a good grip and reduce the tendency to roll on an inclined surface.

The Legend is made by The Keller Company, P.O. Box 809003, Dallas, TX 75380, Phone: (214) 788-4254.

Most miniflashlights have a key ring, which fits into a hole machined

Figure 82. The Sigma-Lite is a miniflashlight that fits conveniently into a pocket.

into the base. It's also possible to use the miniflashlight as an improvised Kubotan.

Figure 83. The Legend is the latest design. There's also a three-cell model.

This is about all that's possible when using the miniflashlights as martial arts weapons, as they don't have the weight of their big brothers. They also don't put out as much light. Although miniflashlights use rare gas bulbs, they are smaller and work on less voltage.

Carrying Accessories

The use for a briefcase is to carry some of the accessories. If you need a weapon, you need it now. By contrast, if you need a flashlight or cuffs, you've often got a few seconds to spare.

It's a mistake to burden yourself with a lot of equipment you might not need. Choose a few items carefully, and they will take care of your needs.

Figure 84. A miniflashlight serves as an improvised Kubotan. Pressed into the angle of the jaw, it helps move a recalcitrant suspect.

Figure 85. Pressing a miniflashlight into the elbow forces compliance.

Chapter Sixteen

BODY ARMOR

The plainclothes officer's needs in armor are very different from those of the uniformed officer. First, he doesn't need to wear armor every minute. He's not likely to have to jump from a lost child call to a robbery in progress. He can spend an entire day in his office processing paperwork, but at other times he will have to make a high-risk arrest or otherwise expose himself to danger. This affects the choice of body armor.

The uniformed officer usually wears his armor as an under-garment because his uniform covers it. A detective wearing a Palm Beach shirt might find an armored undershirt clumsy. The off-duty officer probably won't wear any.

It's more convenient for the plainclothes officer to don armor when he feels he will need it, such as whenever he goes out "on business." As we have seen from the cases we have examined, there are no truly "safe" assignments, and it's always possible to walk into a crime in progress, on or off-duty.

What's Available

Body armor manufacturers produce armored vests that resemble normal outerwear. Some look like vests made for three-piece suits. Others are sports jackets and windbreakers with armor built in. Yet another looks like a trench coat. All allow the officer to remove the armor easily when in his office, and to don it when needed. This offers the best of both worlds, avoiding the discomfort of wearing hot and bulky armor all day, yet placing it within reach when necessary.

There are several "Threat Levels" of protection available. Threat Levels are specified by government standard, and listed in various manufacturer's catalogs, so we won't list them here. We can summarize the main points by stating that Threat Levels I, IIA, and II are for protection against handgun bullets, Level III is for submachinegun bullets, and Level IV protects against rifle bullets. It's not worth going into more detail because the Justice Department's standard, NIJ-0101.03,

is on its third revision and may be changed again soon. Suffice to say that plainclothes and off-duty officers will most likely be concerned with armor below Level III.

The Second Chance "Investigator" Ballistic Jacket looks like a wind-

Figure 86. The "Investigator" ballistic jacket, designed to resemble an ordinary windbreaker.

breaker. Zipped into the jacket shell is an armored liner consisting of "Y-2" panels, Level II–A protection. These are contoured to wrap around the torso. Panels for Levels II and III–A are also available. Jacket weight in Level II–A is six lbs. The front panels overlap, closing with Velcro® strips. A separate cloth panel attaches to the rear of the jacket with Velcro. This panel is for a "POLICE" or "SHERIFF" logo, allowing use as a raid jacket.

The Second Chance quilted outer liner, Figure 87, accepts several protection levels. It accepts a contoured armor panel in a split pocket behind the front zipper. This suffices for front protection. For rear protection, the Six Point Adjustable (SPA) carrier, Figure 88, is designed to fit under the lining, with the straps passing through the shoulder straps of the vest to hold the front carrier.

Those who wish to wear the armor during the entire shift can wear the SPA under their shirts, in conventional fashion.

One feature of the SPA worth noting, Figure 89, is the front pocket for a steel plate, such as the "K-30" and "K-47" plates. These provide different levels of protection against carbine and rifle bullets.

The Silent Partner "Diplomat" vest, Figure 90, is a vest made to go with a suit. Inside the front and back are square pockets for armor panels. There are several thicknesses of panels available, and the pockets can hold more than one panel for extra protection. For example, combining a Level I and a Level II–A panel gives Level II protection.

The Point Blank "Street Jac," Figure 91, is a ballistic windbreaker with side flap pockets. It resembles the Investigator but comes in five different protection levels; I, II–A, II, II+, and III–A. Jacket weight varies with protection level, and ranges from six lbs. for Level I to 12 lbs for the Level III–A model.

The Point Blank "Marksman" ballistic jacket, Figure 92, is similar to the Street Jac, with the same five protection levels and weights, but with somewhat different styling and box pockets instead of side flap pockets.

A larger garment is the Point Blank "Ballistic Raincoat," in five protection levels. The ballistic vest is an inner liner and zips out for cleaning. It's worth noting that the armor only protects the chest and back, and not the abdomen and thighs, although the raincoat covers them.

Figure 87. Another model designed to look like clothing is the Second Chance quilted vest. This holds the Six-Point Adjustable vest inside.

Figure 88. The Six-Point-Adjustable worn alone.

Figure 89. With or without the quilted vest, the SPA accepts a steel plate that defeats 30-caliber rifle bullets.

Figure 90. The Silent Partner "Diplomat" vest is made to fit in with a three-piece suit. Interior pockets accept various thicknesses of ballistic pads.

Figure 91. The "Street Jac" is a windbreaker design which carries concealed ballistic panels.

Figure 92. A less formal jacket is the "Marksman," also made by Point Blank, and which also accepts an assortment of ballistic panels.

Which Protection Level?

As we've seen, ballistic vests come in several protection levels. Which is best for you? There's no easy answer.

The ideal vest weighs as little as a tee-shirt and will stop a rocket launcher. Unfortunately, no such vest exists in real life. The more protection you want, the more thickness and weight you'll have to carry.

Some of the lightest vests weigh only a couple of pounds in Level I, to stop a standard .38 Special round and lesser calibers such as .380ACP, .32 Auto, etc. Ten years ago this was adequate, because felons rarely carried anything heavier. Today, the 9mm Luger is popular among both police and lawbreakers. This round penetrates more than the standard .38 Special.

A good way to decide which protection level you need is to look at weapons used by lawbreakers in your area. In this you have to play the percentages. If about 90 percent use .357 Magnum or lower, you will probably decide on Level II protection. You can ignore the occasional

heavier caliber, or the guy who used a .300 Magnum hunting rifle on his wife. You can't guard against everything, and many of the heavier weapons don't find use against police officers, anyway.

In this regard, you're better off than the uniformed officer. He has to wear armor eight hours a day. You put yours on only when you need it. You can tolerate more discomfort than the officer who wears it the entire shift.

What To Expect From Armor

Some call an armored vest a "second chance," like the brand. If the bad guy gets the first shot, the armor gives you a second chance to put him down and survive.

Others call it a piece of portable cover. Actually, compared to the vulnerable areas of your body, it's a very small piece. Body armor stops bullets from penetrating your heart, lungs, spine, and perhaps liver and spleen, depending on exactly how you're built and how much the vest covers.

Your head and neck are exposed. So's your lower abdomen, a larger target. Your legs, with the vital femoral arteries, are unprotected. Keep in mind that a solid hit on a femoral artery will start a hemorrhage that can kill you in a few minutes.

Believe it or not, that's the good news. The bad news is that today, suspects know that police officers wear body armor, thanks to a few ill-advised and sensationalized television programs. Now that they know your chest's protected, they'll aim for the head.

Now for some more good news: Do you know how difficult it is to make a head shot? Ever try it? Ever try it under stress? The bad guys are even worse shots than you are. They usually score fewer hits than police officers.

However, as we have seen in earlier chapters, that's no reason to become complacent. Body armor protects you only up to a point. Remember that you have to do the rest yourself. Use good tactics, beginning with good cover.

Daily Use

Maintenance of plainclothes body armor is somewhat easier than that of underwear-type vests. Outer garments don't soak up perspiration as quickly because they're not next to the skin. The plainclothes officer also

isn't likely to wear his armor for as many hours a day as the uniformed officer wears his.

The typical outer garment, such as the Second Chance Investigator, has a zippered liner containing pockets for the armor. This allows quick removal to clean the outer shell. The Silent Partner Diplomat vest also has pockets for the armored panels.

Most carriers are cotton or a blend of poly/cotton. These can go into a washing machine, or you can wash them by hand using ordinary detergent or soap. The ballistic panels require special care. You don't usually need to clean these, but if you have to, use a mild soap, but no bleach, which harms Kevlar fabric. Also be careful to rinse the ballistic panels thoroughly because a soap film makes the fibers slippery and decreases resistance to penetration.

Some of these garments are light enough to hang on coathangers. The heavier ones, containing the extra protection armor panels, may deform the garment if you hang them on hooks or coat-hangers. It's better to lay these flat on a shelf.

In a car, you can lay the armored garment on the back seat if you're not wearing it. In some climates, it's just too hot to wear anything but a shirt except when danger's imminent.

Suppliers of Plainclothes Body Armor:

American Body Armor
P.O. Drawer 1769
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
Phone: (800) 428-0588
Att: Chuck Naismith

Point Blank Body Armor
185 Dixon Avenue
Amityville, NY 11701
Phone (800) 645-4443
Att: Tony Borgese

Second Chance
P.O. Box 578
Central Lake, MI 49622-9989
Phone: (800) 253-7090
Att: Richard Davis

Silent Partner
612-18 Third Street
Gretna, LA 70053
Phone: (800) 321-5741
att: Diane Zufle

Appendix

COURSE OF FIRE FOR PLAINCLOTHES OFFICERS

As we have seen, plainclothes officers face different hazards, and need different orientation, training, and tactics. It's equally plain that firearms training and qualification must meet the special needs of plainclothes officers. Academy training is set up for the uniformed force, and involves firing from an exposed holster.

A new course of fire is necessary for plainclothes training and qualification. This must be specifically tailored to the situations plainclothes officers are most likely to face in order to meet their needs. A course which is just a rehash of the FBI course, the PPC, or one of its variants, isn't adequate. There's no point in having a 25- or 50-yard stage of fire if this happens only occasionally if it means neglecting training to prepare the officer to meet the most likely challenges. It's especially useless if it's been covered in another course.

The courses and training programs laid out here aren't particularly original, but they are unusual. They're geared to simulate the situations plainclothes officers are most likely to face. An important feature is the counseling that forms a part of each stage. The instructor helps the student gain insights into what techniques and tactics work for him, instead of rigidly prescribing the "approved" methods.

All plainclothes officers should fire this course when first assigned, and take remedial training if they fail. Moreover, this course can be instead of or in addition to the regular periodic qualification course. Because this course is radically different from conventional qualification courses, it would be counter-productive to require qualifying both ways. If it's necessary to choose, we advise choosing this one, because it's more realistic and more soundly based on real-life street conditions.

There are several reasons for this:

Many courses emphasize the "Weaver" stance. There are a couple of problems with this stance. One is that this stance requires turning the body, exposing the side of the torso. If the officer has a ballistic vest that isn't the wrap-around design, he will expose the unprotected side to

gunfire. Another problem is that in close-up situations, the officer may need one hand to deflect or block the adversary's weapon. Finally, in a close confrontation, it's poor practice to thrust the weapon out in front, within the suspect's reach.

Another problem with some qualification courses is that they include reloading drills in the standing position. A typical stage has the officers fire three shots, reload, and fire two more before reholstering. This is an exercise designed to develop proficiency and speed in reloading the handgun, but it also trains the officer in poor tactics. People tend to react as they have practiced during training, as pointed out in the New York City Police Department's SOP-9 Report. This study found that officers invariably "resort to techniques learned during training exercises." The officer who reloads standing up during a gunfight when cover is available takes an unnecessary risk.

The course laid out here includes very little weak hand shooting. The theory behind weak hand shooting seems fine on paper, but the New York City Report found that officers mostly used the strong hand, even when there were advantages to using the weak hand. Training that induces officers to do something with which they're not comfortable is counterproductive.

There was one incident among those in this book in which an officer was hit in the gun hand. For this reason, there's one stage in which officers will fire with the weak hand.

Range Set-Up

This course requires a small range with many obstructions, such as old furniture, a car, old mailbox, and a couple of telephone poles. These are scattered on the range, and targets are placed among them as specified for each stage. No distances are to be marked on the range, as this course of fire will not call for "X shots at Y range." All firing will be from unknown ranges between zero and ten yards.

Officer And Weapon

The officer will dress as he would on normal plainclothes duty, in clothing suitable for the season. The officer will carry the handgun in the same place as carried on duty. The supervision of his commanding officer is essential to verify the normal mode of carry.

Except in climates where no outer clothing is appropriate, all drawing will be from under a jacket or coat. If the weather is cold enough outside

to require closing the coat, draw will be from a closed coat or jacket. The holster will be snapped, if it has a safety strap or thumb-break. If the carry is in a purse, bankbag, or briefcase, the officer will start with it closed.

Initial Dry Practice

The officer will unload his weapon, and under coaching by the instructor, will draw and dry-fire a round at a target directly in front of him and no farther than six feet distant. Counseling by the instructor is vital at this stage, because this is a good opportunity to point out the shortcomings of the various holsters and types of carry. If the shooter uses an ankle holster, pointing out the slowness of the draw compared to other carries is part of the instructor's task. He should also mention the increased vulnerability involved in stooping over to draw. This will help the officer make an intelligent choice because he'll understand the limits of the carry system. If he kneels to draw, this also takes more time than drawing from a belt or shoulder holster. However, this position isn't as off-balance as stooping.

The officer can also become acquainted with the problems involved in several belt carry positions. The instructor points out the relationship between concealability and difficulty of draw. If necessary, he can have the student draw from different positions on the belt to get the "feel" of each.

Minimal proficiency during this stage is three seconds. If the officer cannot attain this standard after repeated tries, the instructor will counsel him regarding mode of carry or technique of drawing, as this is too slow.

Advanced Dry Practice

This is to help the student improve his stance, and to coordinate the stance with the situation. A weakness of many police firearms courses is that they tend to reflect the instructor's prejudices. We find some instructors pushing the "Weaver" stance, while others favor the "isosceles" or "turret" stance. All have their good and bad points, and not all students do equally well with them. A further point which the student in this course will learn is that at extremely short ranges, the two-handed grip can be dangerous because it takes more time than point-shooting and places the weapon high up and way out, within reach of the offender.

The instructor checks the student's weapon to ensure that it's unloaded. He has the student face him at a range of three feet. The student draws and points his weapon at the instructor, who either deflects the weapon if it's within reach or reaches under it with a rubber knife and "stabs" the student. The purpose is to demonstrate graphically to the student that at very close range, the two-handed grip is hazardous, and that the priorities are to block a suspect's attack and to keep the weapon out of his reach.

The instructor repeats the exercise at ranges of five and eight feet to give the student a "feel" of the close combat situation and to allow him to find out for himself what works best at various ranges.

During this practice, the student should try to improve his time from three to 2.5 seconds. This requirement must be flexible, because of the effect of clothing worn in different parts of the country.

Live Fire

The first stage is a basic orientation and diagnostic stage which will help the student understand the conditions and techniques of close armed combat. It will also uncover possible problem areas. It requires one box, fifty rounds, of ammunition, maximum. All sidearms are loaded and holstered, at all times except when firing. Running a "hot range" is vital for indoctrinating the students that their weapons are always loaded and ready to fire, as this is the real-life condition they will encounter on the street.

Targets should be paper photographic targets of the sort produced by Speedwell or Anatomy Target Company. These are more realistic than brightly colored cartoons or black silhouettes.

The "Anatomy Man" target, Figure 93, is a black silhouette with white outlines of the body's organs, numbered in proportion to their vulnerability. This scoring system is more realistic than the modified "bullseye" used on many silhouettes.

Speedwell photographic targets, Figures 94–96, have offenders in black-and-white halftone. This is more realistic than photographic or cartoon targets printed in bright colors.

The Anatomy Omega Target, Figure 97, provides a photographic suspect with anatomy lines overprinted in black. The lines fade out at more than a few feet distance, but work well for scoring.

There should be six paper targets set up on the range, at distances from a couple of feet to ten yards. Targets are numbered "1" to "6," from

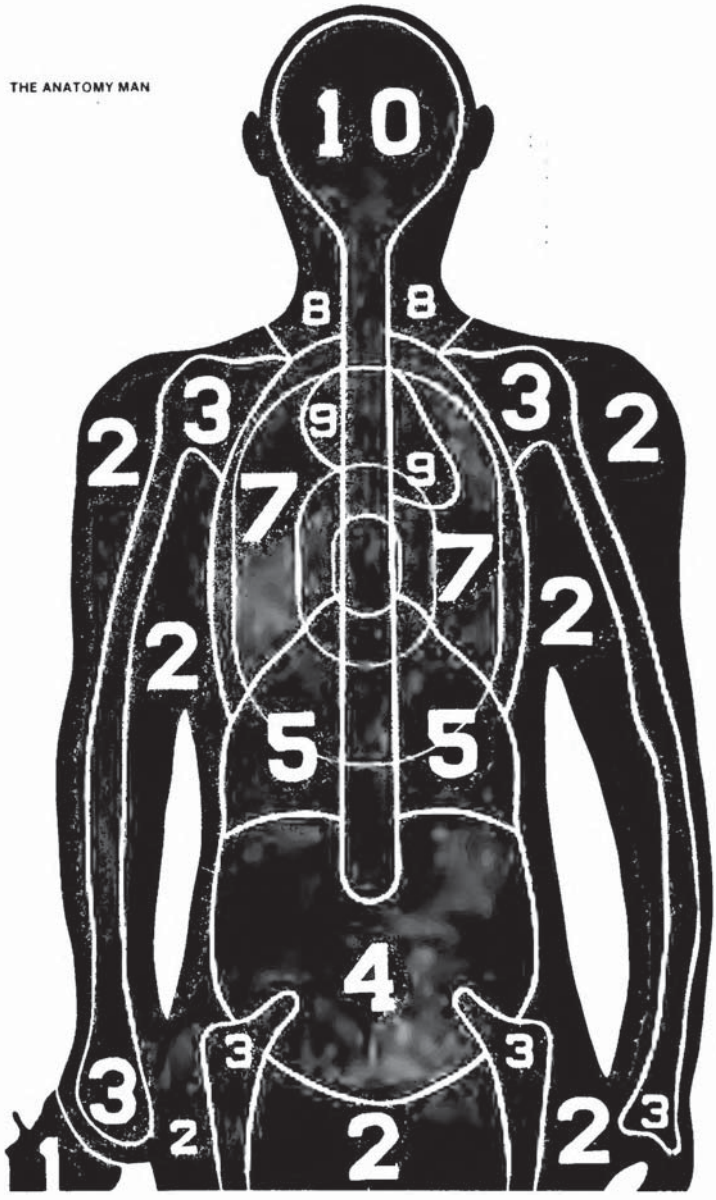


Figure 93. The "Anatomy Man" target scores by body organ hit, based on the results of autopsies after armed encounters.

Figure 94. This Speedwell target is a suspect, but another version shows a badge in the upraised hand. This feature provides versatility for shoot/don't shoot scenarios.

left to right. Numbers are not marked on the faces of the targets. This forces the officer to think before firing.

Candidates waiting their turn remain behind a berm or otherwise out of sight of the target area until their turn. The officer stands at the firing

Figure 95. The shotgun-wielding man serves for a scenario requiring assigning threat priorities.

Figure 96. This photographic target is definitely a "threat" target.

Figure 97. The "Omega" target has organs outlined, and scored according to vulnerability. The lines are dark and unobtrusive, making this target very suitable for advanced training.

line, weapon holstered. When he hears the instructor call out a target's number, he draws and fires. The instructor calls out numbers from a random written list, in order, to assure that all officers face the same course of fire. Each officer fires ten "shoots." During one shoot for each officer, the instructor taps his gun arm while he's drawing. This is the signal that he's been hit in the gun arm. The officer transfers the weapon to his other hand and fires.

Unlike other courses, this one requires that the officer firing the course not know beforehand if he's going to have to shoot with the strong or weak hand. This reflects reality, in which an officer doesn't know if he's going to be hit or where a suspect's bullet will hit him.

The purpose is not to empty his weapon into the target, but to get hits that would probably put an attacker down. Firing may be one-handed or two-handed, at the officer's choice. Maximum time allowed for each shoot is three seconds. The instructor shall score each shoot as "pass" or "fail," based on these criteria:

Two hits in central torso (two inches in from the edges) scores a "pass."

One hit in the head scores a "pass."

If using the Anatomy targets, scoring according to values on the targets is allowed to determine "pass" or "fail." With this system, a score of "10" results in a "stop."

Finishing with an empty weapon scores a "fail."

Shooting other than the designated target scores a "fail."

Placing the weapon within arm's reach of the designated target scores a "fail."

Failure to complete the course with one box of ammunition is a "fail" for the entire course.

Reloading between shoots is allowed, if necessary.

After this session, the instructor should point out to his students the problems involved in deciding whether to fire with one hand or both. The instructor should recognize that it's pointless to be dogmatic about the shooting stance, because both students' abilities and conditions in the field vary too much to allow hard rules. He should encourage the student to fire at the start with only one hand, leaving the other hand free for defensive actions. At very close ranges, up to about ten feet, most people can score hits without bringing the handgun completely up into the line of sight. This is a vitally important point because of the findings of New York's SOP-9 Report. Seventy percent of their cases showed that

officers did not use the sights in real-life shootings. Officers did tend to use a "rough sight" or other form of sight picture at longer ranges.

Of the 254 officers killed by felons between September, 1854 and December, 1979, 86 were killed by felons at ranges of three feet or closer. Another 119 were killed by suspects between three to six feet away from them. This adds up to 81 percent killed at ranges of six feet or closer! At such close ranges, there's barely time to draw, much less shuffle the feet, turn the body, and bring both hands up. It's also counterproductive and downright dangerous to put the weapon out in front, with the suspect's reach. This is such an important point that it's worth repeating for emphasis.

The firearms instructor should also point out that as distance between the shooter and target increases, it become harder to hit using one hand alone, or by "pointing." At longer ranges, the danger may be less immediate and there's more time to raise the weapon, grip it with both hands for steadiness, and use the sights. When explaining this point, the instructor should ask each student what sort of ballistic protection he normally wears. Students who have vests without a wrap-around feature should understand the danger of side exposure involved in the Weaver stance.

Fire from Cover

The set-up is the same, except that the targets are partly obstructed by other targets. These should be distinctive, to promote recognition. An "H" on the front of each no-shoot target is sufficient. The instructor sets up several pylons along the range, placing them at varying distances from the firing line. Every other pylon is numbered, corresponding to a target. The officer walks along the line, and when he reaches a numbered pylon he takes cover behind the nearest solid object and opens fire at the designated target. No reloading after each shoot. When shooters find it necessary to reload, they are to do it from behind cover and from magazines or other reloading aids they normally carry on duty. Any who normally carry "loose change," will reload this way.

It's necessary to use pylons to assure that each officer walks the same course. The choice of cover is up to the individual.

In using cover, students should not use the "barricade" position. The instructor should point out that it's slower to assume the barricade position than to grip the weapon in both hands and pop out from behind cover. The weapon's recoil almost always poses a problem for people

using the barricade position. This is a point often ignored by instructors, who assume that there's a "correct" way to do it that avoids the problem. There's isn't. The weapon recoils, either loosening the shooter's grip or slapping his hand into the barricade.

Scoring is the same as before, with two additional factors:

1. A hit on a "hostage" scores a "fail" for that shoot.
2. Failure to use cover scores a "fail."

After the shooters are finished, the instructor will lead a discussion of when and how to use cover. Points to mention are:

1. When is returning fire better than going for cover?
2. In which situations is it better to take cover first?

This type of course is basic for the plainclothes officer. The instructor and students, by using their imaginations, can add variety to the course. One involves the use of the Speedwell "Hostage" target, Figure 98.

This shows a suspect mostly shielded by his hostage. The main value of this target is to require decision-making by the student. He has to calculate his chances of "taking out" the suspect without hitting the hostage. There may be a departmental policy regarding opening fire when hostages are involved. If there is, this is a good point at which to discuss it.

Very interesting courses are possible with paint-ball guns. These allow use indoors, in built-up areas, because they fire paint balls at low enough speeds to be fairly safe and nonpenetrating. Use of these training aids requires wearing face masks as precautions. One problem with paint-ball guns is that they all too bulky to make credible concealment weapons of the sort detectives might use.

Training to Live

The main point to pursue during training is that all instructions and exercises should be soundly based on "street" conditions. A gunfight is not a target match, and it's not a ballet. Time-consuming instruction in the finer points of a favorite shooting stance is useless because the important task is placing shots on the target, not scoring points for form while doing it.

Realistic, street-based training is vital. It's pointless to present "officer survival" training, including the latest refinements and tactics, if the basic training and qualification teach something different.

Figure 98. The Speedwell "Hostage" target demands both quick decision-making and good marksmanship.

Sources:

Speedwell targets are obtainable from:

Rockwood Corp.
136 Lincoln Blvd.
Middlesex, NJ 08846
Phone: (201) 560-7171
att: Mike Panos or Jim Welch

Anatomy targets are obtainable from:

Anatomy Target Company
P.O. Box 375
Lovelady, TX 75851
Phone: (409) 636-7645
att: Sam Hallman

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